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MODERN SCOTTISH POETS

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MODERN SCOTTISH POETS.

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN.

FRANCIS ROBERT ST CLAIR-ERSKINE, fourth Earl of Rosslyn, was born on the 2nd March, 1833. His Lordship is descended from the ancient families of the Erskines of Mar, and St Clairs of Rosslyn, formerly Princes of Orkney. Lord Loughborough, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain during a portion of last century, was the first Earl. His Lordship was educated at Eton and Merton College, Oxford, of which University he is an M.A. In 1878 he was Special Ambassador to Spain on the occasion of the marriage of King Alphonso, by whom he was invested with the Grand Cordon of Charles III., and was for several years Her Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In April, 1885, at a meeting of the Grand Lodge held in Edinburgh, his Lordship was installed and invested as Most Worshipful Deputy Grand Master and Governor of the Royal Order of Scotland. The ceremony was conducted with more of the pomp, richness, and quaintness characteristic of the Order than has been witnessed during this century, and in presence of a large assembly of the members, includ-

ing the Earl of Haddington, the Earl of Mar and Kellie, the Earl of Kintore, &c. In thanking the Companions for the honour conferred on him, his Lordship said the fact that this Order was a purely Scottish one had that in it which to him brought something of the old ring of, he might say, clanship, and bore with it a token that the Scotsman who accepted the purely Scottish office, and inspired by national feelings was likely, as he hoped to be, to do his duty in it.

In 1872 the Earl of Rosslyn printed a volume of poems for private circulation, and in 1883 published a volume of "Sonnets" (Messrs Blackwood & Sons), from which our selection is made. These sonnets possess a deep and meditative pathos—a union of deep and subtle thought with keen sensibility. Some of them are perfect models of unity, compactness, and finish, and throughout the volume it is abundantly evident that the noble poet has ever been mindful of the pretty legend of the sonnet, in effect that on a certain day Apollo met the Muses and the Graces. Memory, the grave and noble mother of the Muses, was also present, and each of the fourteen spoke a line of verse—Apollo being first. Then each of the nine Muses having sung her part, and the three Graces warbled each in turn, Memory, in a low, sweet strain made a harmonious close. This is said to have been the first sonnet, and, mindful of its origin, all true poets take care to bid Apollo strike the key-note for them when they compose one, and to let Memory compress the pith and marrow of the sonnet into its last line.

His Lordship's descriptions of thoughts and things are full of luminous and rich imaginings—chaste and sweet, and at the same time as vividly impressive in effect as they are lofty and simple in their construction. They have been inspired amidst scenes in every respect favourable to lofty reflection, and

during the well-employed leisure which the poet's circumstances have afforded. Reviewing Lord Rosslyn's "Sonnets," the *Spectator* says—"The sonnet, indeed, to a writer who really knows the principles of his art, and has the necessary command of expression, is an admirable vehicle of thought, more especially if facility is a temptation to him. The necessary compression and effort are exactly the discipline which he needs, as well as the fact, which a man of sense and culture and reading must needs recognise, that there must be a central thought in each poem, a thought, too, not unworthy of the labour which has been obviously spent upon it. These sonnets—the work, as we gather from the dates, of many years—are of course unequal in merit; but they rise occasionally, we may say more than occasionally, to a high level of merit." We do not hesitate to add that the Earl of Rosslyn will occupy a permanent place as one of our most thoughtful Scottish poets.

OLD LETTERS.

It seems but yesterday she died, but years
  Have passed since then ; the wondrous change of time
  Makes great things little, little things sublime,
And sanctifies the dew of daily tears.
She died, as all must die ; no trace appears
  In History's page, nor save in my poor rhyme,
  Of her, whose life was love, whose lovely prime
Passed sadly where no sorrows are, nor fears.
It seems but yesterday ; to-day I read
  A few short letters in her own dear hand,
And doubted if 'twere true. Their tender grace
Seems radiant with her life ! Oh ! can the dead
  Thus in their letters live ? I tied the band,
And kissed her name as though I kissed her face.

BEDTIME.

'Tis bedtime ; say your hymn, and bid "Good-night,
  God bless mamma, papa, and dear ones all,"
  Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,
Another minute you will shut them quite.

Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,
And tuck you up, although you are so tall !
What will you give me, sleepy one, and call
My wages, if I settle you all right ?
I laid her golden curls upon my arm,
I drew her little feet within my hand,
Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,
Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm
She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,
Paid me my precious wages—" baby's kiss."

AMONG MY BOOKS.

Alone, 'midst living works of mighty dead,
Poets and scholars versed in history's lore,
With thoughts that reached beyond them and before,
I dream, and leave their glorious works unread ;
Their greatness numbs me both in heart and head.
I cannot weep with Petrarch, and still more,
I fail when I would delve the depths of yore,
And learn old Truths of modern lies instead ;
The shelves frown on me blackly, with a life
That ne'er can die, and helpless to begin,
I can but own my weakness, and deplore
This waste, this barren brain, ah ! once so rife
With hope and fancy. Pardon all my sin,
Great Ghosts that wander on the Eternal Shore.

THE TRIUMPHS OF LITERATURE.

" 'Tis the last straw that breaks the camel's back,"
I've read—I know not where, nor care to ask—
So, trembling lest Thy strength it overtask,
I lay this little straw upon Thy Pack,
Laden with priceless gems through the long track
Of centuries, since Learning tore the mask
From Vice and Ignorance. Be it mine to bask
One moment in thy Light—all else how black !
No people claim Thy triumphs as their own—
Italia, Greece, the swarthy Orient all
Are but Thy slaves to-day, or yesterday,
Thou laugh'st at Time ; all languages have grown
From Thee ; Thine Eden's grace and Eden's fall,
All rose from Thee, and cannot pass away.

NATURE.

The heart contains the passions of the mind,
The mind controls the passions of the heart,
So truth and feeling guide the painter's art,
And teach the ignorant to know their kind.

The poet revels in a fancied power,
Not his, nor yet another's—Nature's all ;
His highest thought but answers to her call ;
His noblest verses are her noblest dower.
Like poets, painters can create the life
That breathes upon their canvas, from a source
Unknown to many, yet true talent's force
Is Nature reproduced through patient strife ;
Thus human art is humble to discern
The God of Nature rules o'er all we learn.

EDUCATION.

The oak once lay within the acorn-cup ;
The infant holds the future of the man ;
The minutes, fleeting, compass, a life's span ;
The raindrop swells the foaming torrents up ;
Climate and soil make varied timber grow ;
And differing educations change the child.
Time is resistless ; terrible and wild,
In some dark seasons, mountain-streamlets flow ;
Thus Nature owns an outer influence,
But childhood most of all. Be ours to guide
Their early days with the soft hand of love ;
To teach the truth, and that with least pretence,
To show example none can e'er deride,
And point the way to happiness above !

TRUE REST.

What do men long for, strive for, live for most ?
The purple mantle of ambitious dreams ?
The lying gold that clouds the fairest streams ?
The sacred fervour that adores the Host ?
In all pure nature's simple love is lost,
And truth is farthest when it nearest seems.
O Earth, thy bosom with corruption teems,
And war meets war, and none e'er count the cost.
Great Heaven, how just are thy decrees to all !
How seeming hard to some ! For faith I pray,
For truth and for content ; then death is blest ;
Then virtue, silver-crowned, spreads out our pall,
And all our life is patent as the day,
And after labour comes Seraphic Rest.

GOETHE'S PRAYER.

"More Light, more Light," the Poet's plaintive prayer,
Ere his eyes close for ever in Death's night !

The fainting supplication for "more Light,"
No common struggle for a purer air.
But physical and spiritual joining there,
He prays for rescue from the awful night
Of Doubt that daunts the soul, and blinds the sight,
And makes all dark that should be bright and fair.
"More Light, more Light," in life to Thee we pray,
Great God! wise man to Thee! (Creator Thou,
Created in His image thou,) this cry
Of dying Goethe; in our earthly day
The light of knowledge—truth with open brow—
And God's own Light to guide us when we die.

WORK AND REST.

Give my brain work, the enthusiast wildly cries;
Give my brain rest, the weary toiler prays;
Rest pains: work pains: both follow different ways,
Yet each demands relief and sympathies.
Give each their prayer; the toiler, resting dies;
The enthusiast, losing strength and hope, decays;
Though both, illumined by the mind's bright rays,
Love the dear pain, and hug their agonies.
Thus pain for work devised, completed not,
And pain for overwork, are brethren twain;
Dissimilar, yet alike: poor strugglers, rest;
The longing heart, though failing, makes no blot;
And energetic labour should not pain;
But both united must indeed be blest.

ROBERT WHITE.

THE writer of the following songs and happily expressed *Vers de Societé*, is the youngest and seventh son of the late Adam White of Fens, a Baltic merchant in Leith, and for many years Provost of the Burgh. He was born at Leith in 1802, and educated for the legal profession; and for several years practised with every promise of more than ordinary success as a Writer

to the Signet. But, while shooting with a friend, who was on a visit to him at Auchendrane, in Ayrshire, where he then resided, he had the misfortune to receive accidentally the contents of a gun in his head, and narrowly escaped losing his eyesight; and suffering much, and being confined to a darkened room for about two years and a half, he found himself obliged to relinquish the duties of an exacting profession, and devote himself to the restoration of his shattered system.

Mr White has not devoted himself to literature. He has engaged in it only occasionally as a resource against ennui, and to relieve the tedium of inactivity. His first appearance in that department was a translation, or rather an abridgment, of the French work of De Burtin on "Pictures," published by Adam Black & Co., Edinburgh, 1845, which met with a very favourable reception, and has been long out of print. His next escapade was a set of fifty original Reels and Strathspeys, under the *nom-de-plume* of "Kittle Thairms," a name adopted from Burns' "Jolly Beggars," and meaning to "tease cat-gut." These were performed in public at a concert in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, when they met with a hearty reception. Mr White subsequently published thirty-six original hymn tunes, which were very highly spoken of by the leading reviewers, and were soon bought up. Since then he has from time to time published, through Messrs Wood & Co., Edinburgh, songs that have been eminently successful—their popularity being enhanced by the circumstances that the music is also by the accomplished and versatile author, which almost ensures that it will be appropriate, and rightly express the sentiment. He has also recently published (Messrs J. B. Cramer & Co., London) a valuable and instructive brochure, entitled "Nature's Solfeggio, or Singing Simplified," which gives evidence at once of fine taste and powerful thought.

In the verses we now submit, it is curious to observe the influences of circumstances. Our author having, during the active period of his life, been more occupied with men and things than with external nature, his lucubrations relate more to the social aspect of events than to their naturalistic features, or to scenic description. This is particularly observable in the pieces entitled "*Vers de Societé*, or *petites* Rondellettes," in which he successfully adopts the modes recently introduced with so much acceptance by Austen Dobson, the London poet—modes in which we are not aware that he has had any other follower. They present great difficulties in the finding of a subject sufficiently piquant, and yet capable of being epitomised, and in confining it within only two rhymes, which must fit into certain places, and yet carry forward the argument. When we bear in mind that several of the following specimens in this style are the recent compositions of one in his eighty-third year, and an invalid, we cannot but sympathise with the genial tone of the sentiment; while as a whole we should characterise Mr White's poetry as evincing a carefully cultivated mind, delicate fancy, happy terms of expression, and a rich musical flow of rhyme and rhythmus.

MY BARK.

My bark, my gay, my gallant bark,
'Tis time we cease to roam,
Thou'st rocked my rest at midnight dark,
And been by day my home.

By many a moonlit isle thou'st slept,
Whose sands soft hushing gave;
In many a hurricane thou'st stept,
In pride, from wave to wave.

We've neared the Pole where blaze the stars
Like lamps hung out on high,

And spirits flash in mimic wars
Athwart the kindling sky.

And oft, in climes serenely calm,
In sunny creek we've lain,
Where dipping boughs all breathing balm
Were mirrored in the main.

But cherished now thou rest shalt find,
From toil and danger free,
And high upon the beech reclined
Shalt still behold the sea.

Thou'lt wistful eye each parting sail,
Slow fading in the blue,
And hear thy name upon the gale
Invoked to cheer her crew.

OH, SAY NOT LIFE IS BUT DECAY.

Oh, say not life is but decay,
Though blighted be thy cherished bower,
Nor call thy path a weary way
Without a joy—without a flower.

The sun that glows in rays of gold,
The night that sleeps in opal light,
The hills, the plains, the streams behold,
And let thy spirit drink delight.
Oh, say not life is but decay, etc.

The eyes that round thee kindly smile
Might sorrow's self to gladness move;
And there's a spell can grief beguile
In words that fall from lips we love.
Oh, say not life is but decay, etc.

There's joy, there's joy in childhood's day,
In maiden grace, in manly power;
And hope receives from heaven a ray
That brightens e'en the parting hour.
Then say not life is but decay, etc.

OH, A SOLDIER'S LIFE IS THE LIFE FOR ME.

Oh, a soldier's life is the life for me,
With his trumpets, bugles, fifes, and drums;
Oh, a gallant heart and a gay has he,
With his r-r-r-r-r, row, dow, dow, dow, dow.

With steady tread, in columns red,
And bayonets glittering gay;
Our colours spread, to glory led,
We march, we march away.
Oh, a soldier's life, etc.

Alert we go, be't sun or snow,
To death if duty call,
Resolved to o'erthrow our country's foe,
And honour win or fall.
Oh, a soldier's life, etc.

Where'er we roam we make it home;
We serenade in Spain;
By turns with France we fight or dance;
The Germans' flask we drain.
Oh, a soldier's life, etc.

We love siege, sack, and bivouac,
We love the gay parade,
With haversack upon our back,
Kit, musket, and cockade.
Oh, a soldier's life, etc.

The conflict bye, we snatch the joy
Which mirth and friends impart,
And woman's eye will ne'er deny
A look to cheer our heart.
Oh, a soldier's life, etc.

OH, WHO TO DULL ROSES WOULD LIKEN HIS LOVE.

Oh, who to dull roses would liken his love,
Or her eyes to the stars twinkling heedless above;
Who her varying voice could compare to the song
Of a stream humming changeless and chilly along.
The star may seem bright but it beams not with feeling,
The river sings sweet o'er its pebble bed stealing,
But tells it of heart stirring pleasure or pain?
And the flower, if you kiss, will it kiss you again?

All brilliant, 'tis true, is the blush of the rose:
But, untouched by emotion, it comes not nor goes,
Nor can ought throughout nature a beauty impart,
"Like the bloom on the cheek that is sent from the heart."
To me give the eye that now glistens, now glows,
As it shares in your joys or partakes of your woes.
Give the voice that replies to the love that one feels
As the harp to the winds sweetest music reveals.

Of old, they essayed in the marble to mould
A true model of beauty—but ah, it was cold ;
Though the features might boast the strict impress of art,
Yet it could not but fail—for it wanted a heart.
Enamoured you gazed, but 'twas heedless the while ;
The lips ne'er relaxed to enchant with a smile,
Nor sunshine nor shade could the lineaments move ;
And, though looking like life—yet it never could love.

I LOVE TO WATCH THE SURGE.

I love to watch the surge that throws
  Its foam upon the shore,
And wonder if it seek repose—
  Its angry effort o'er.
    Do hushing sands
    In sunny lands,
  Recruit the weary wave?
    Or finds it rest
    Upon the breast
  Of some far coral cave ?
I love to watch the surge that throws
  Its foam upon the shore,
And wonder if it seek repose—
  Its angry effort o'er.

I love to look on stormy skies,
  When wrapt in night's dark shroud,
To see the moon refulgent rise
  Beyond the drifted cloud.
    Does she serene,
    With tranquil mien,
  Thus ever onward go?
    Untroubled still,
    Whatever ill
  May rage in realms below?
I love to look on stormy skies,
  When wrapt in night's dark shroud,
To see the moon refulgent rise
  Beyond the drifted cloud.

'Tis sweet to muse where infant rills
  Run sparkling to the river ;
Yet sad to think they leave the hills
  And lose their youth for ever.
    They little heed
    As on they speed
  The striving flood to gain,
    What peace is lost
    When tempest-tossed
  They mingle with the main.

'Tis sweet to muse where infant rills
Run sparkling to the river;
Yet sad to think they leave the hills
And lose their youth for ever.

THE HOPE OF LOVE.

Huzzah, huzzah, see our lances gleam,
To the field, the field we move;
Oh, who shall fight with an arm like him
That is fired with the hope of love.
Her father swore, by his deeds of yore,
And the arms on his dinted shield,
I should never wed her till with knightly spur
I returned from a conquered field.
Then huzzah, huzzah, etc.

Huzzah, huzzah, though our blades be dim,
From the conquered field we move;
Oh, who could fight with an arm like him
That was fired with the hope of love.
I wore her pledge upon my breast—
They led to victory;
I bore her image in my breast—
Ah! it has conquered me.
Then huzzah, huzzah, etc.

Huzzah, huzzah, see our lances gleam,
From the conquered field we move;
Oh, who could fight with an arm like him
That was fired with the hope of love.
Her father waits at his castle gates
To greet me as his son;
The priest attends with troops of friends,
And bride and spurs are won.
Then huzzah, huzzah, etc.

THE SUMMER THAT WILL LAST.

Oh, summer time's the best by far,
But ah, how soon 'tis past;
So bright, so fair her glories are,
We wish they'd ever last.

The sun displays his brightest rays,
The skies their purest blue,
O'er all the plain waves golden grain,
And flowers of every hue.
Oh, summer time, etc.

The morning leads us o'er the meads,
Or up the mountains green,
To trace the brook to many a nook
Where scarce a foot has been.
Oh, summer time, etc.

At eventide on every side
There wakes a woodland choir,
While we upon the velvet lawn
Disport till day retire.
Oh, summer time, etc.

But flowers will fade, the leafy shade
Be wrecked by winter's blast;
Then firmly hold the day foretold—
The summer that will last.
Oh, summer time, etc.

A ROSE ONE DAY.

A rose one day
Mistook a ray
Of wintry sun for summer's glow.
It o'er the wild,
But looked and smiled,
And shrunk e'er it could fully blow.

Ah, thus when young
Hope's winning tongue
How fond we hear, how fond believe;
How soon we find,
That seeming kind,
She flatters often to deceive.

Yet who could say
To Hope, Away?
Or bid the feeble sun begone?
No, still illume,
Bright orb, the gloom,
And still, oh, friendly Hope, cheat on.

We'd better seem,
Wer't but a dream,
To have been blest than ne'er have smiled;
And better gain
An hour from pain
Than never be so well beguiled.

VERS DE SOCIETE.

RONDEL—THE TULIPS.

Every flower be thine,
But the Tulip for me ;
The Rose may entwine
With the sweet Jessamine,
And the Lily combine,
If sufficient for thee.
Every flower be thine,
My Love's Two-lips for me !

RONDEL—THE OWL.

The owl is wise, and well he may,
He sees when no one else can see,
He winks and thinks in his turret grey,
But never a word does ever he say ;
He whistles at e'en when I pass that way,
And his whistle directs my love to me.
The owl is wise, and well he may,
He sees when no one else can see.

THE PROVERB.

Hal.—" 'Tis a proverb, my Poll ; yet you call it good fun,
When things reach their worst, then of course they must mend."
Polly.—" Well the roses I planted are withered and gone ;
The silk I wish matched is sold out, and there's none,
The grey hair I plucked, even were it but one,
Is less likely to stop than it is to extend,
A proverb 't may be, yet I call it good fun,
For things *have* reached their worst, and how *are* they to mend ? "

GLEE.

In olden time there lived three knights
Who kept the court quite gay,
With drinking, laughter, love, and fights,
Throughout the livelong day.
The first had a throat like a river's bed,
Which he never let run dry,
The second he had a good thick head
And blows were his only cry.
The third he had a tender heart,
And love was all his song.
But the court they laughed at Dan Cupid's art,
With a ha ! ha ! loud and long.

'Twas thus in olden time these knights
Still kept the court quite gay,
With drinking, laughter, love, and fights,
Throughout the livelong day.

At length the two, by Cupid caught,
Quite changed their brawling way,
And now 'twas wooing, cooing, nought
But cooing all the day.
The first save a health to his lady-love
Of quaffing made an end.
The next in no ruder combat strove,
Than in sport for a kiss to contend,
And now they with the third took part,
And love was all their song.
While the court still laughed at Dan Cupid's art
With a ha, ha, loud and long.
'Twas thus these knights by Cupid caught,
Still kept the court quite gay,
Though now 'twas wooing, cooing, nought
But cooing all the day.

CONUNDRUM.

I'm very fat—I'm very thin—
I've neither blood, nor bones, nor skin.
By nature blind as any bat,
I'm full of light in spite of that.
On nothing but myself I feed,
So while I last I cannot need.
Though I can swim, yet that I shun;
I cannot walk, yet often run.
The outward aspect that I wear
Is smooth and sleek and seeming fair;
But when the light betrays the art
I'm wick-ed proved, and black at heart.
With sheepish nature—temper even—
I oft at sixes am and seven.
I typify the Church to many,
But of religion ne'er had any.
And if I'm flurried, dread my rage,
Lest I your winding-sheet presage.—
Yet not without some touch of good,
I too have had my melting mood.
And drink is not 'mongst my demerits,
Although I'm never out of spirits.

The lesser weaknesses I own to,
For smoking I am rather prone to.
And, though I do not care to blab it,
Yet snuffing *is* to me a habit.
At Court, in gold and frill I stand,
But serve the poor with even hand.
I no ambition have, nor pride,
Nor care (of which Grimalkin died).
And though for style I use a stick,
'Tis not because I am old or sick.
Indeed I thought t' have lived for ever,
Had *not* it been—that G-a-s-t-r-i-c Fever!

Who would my riddle rightly handle
Must light and look well at "a candle."

EPIGRAM.

The Englishman cries, when his efforts fall flat,
That the Scotch to all jokes are opaque, man.
But the Scotsman replies, laughing loudly *at that*,
'Twill be seen when the English can make one!

EPIGRAM.

Nemo me, &c.

Sydney Smith, though unfit,
Sought to pass for a wit
On the strength of assurance he had at command.
And when nought it availed,
He his hearers assailed,
And declared it was they, who did not understand.

DANIEL WILSON, LL.D.

DANIEL WILSON, LL.D., Professor of History and English Literature, University College, Toronto, was born at Edinburgh in 1816, and educated at the High School of his native city, where he distinguished himself as a diligent and proficient scholar. The evidences he gave from childhood of artistic talents caused his parents to send him (at the age of fifteen) to be apprenticed as a pictorial engraver with William Miller, the celebrated engraver of Turner's pictures. He soon acquired astonishing proficiency, and imitated his master's style so successfully that their works could scarcely be discriminated by other than the technically expert.

Poetry and pictorial art are twin-sisters of sympathetic indissolubility, and so we find Wilson the early lover of both—the avowed and acknowledged of one, but the clandestine wooer of the other. During his early manhood, Dr Wilson wrote anonymously, and contributed verses to the local press. These he gathered into a posy, and published (in 1845) under the title of "Spring Wild Flowers." The authorship of this modest little volume was veiled under the *nom-de-plume* "Will. De Leina, Esq., of the Outer Temple, to Jessie Eleanor, his infant daughter, the author dedicates, very affectionately, this little bunch of 'Spring Wild Flowers,' with the hope that neither may be nipped by the frosts of an early winter." Having gone out of print and memory for many years, and being required as a marriage-gift for the lady to whom it was dedicated, the Messrs Nelson, Edinburgh, re-published it handsomely in 1875. The author, in his preface to this edition, says:—"There is an age at which most thoughtful men—and some thoughtless ones too—are prone to give utterance to their fancies in verse, without meaning thereby to assert a claim

to the high rank of poet. Whether it be wise for one who has so long passed this stage to sanction in any way the reproduction of such 'sins of his youth' may be doubted. But since the reproduction of them was already determined on, it seemed wise to revise and re-arrange the contents of the old volume, and weed it of some worthless and other too objectionable pieces, which might suit Mr De Leina's task, but by no means commend themselves to his successor. In this process the original title has been rendered less appropriate. But, though two or three autumn leaves have thus been added to the old garland, the collection, as a whole, is the same bunch of wild flowers gathered long ago 'when life was in its spring."

These versicles, if they do not attain to great and dazzling altitudes of poetic flight, or babble mysteriously in metaphysical falsettos, have, nevertheless, distinct excellencies of their own. They never falter on the wing, rhythmically or mentally, but maintain a steady, appreciative course within popular ken. They are the outcome of an elevated and refined mind, a pure, Christian spirit, and a patriotic Scottish heart.

Their author, however, is less known in the region of poetry than in Archæological literature, especially that section of it relating to Scotland. His "Memorials of Edinburgh in the olden time," and "Reminiscences of old Edinburgh," both of which are superbly illustrated by his graver and pencil, are standard works on the subject. The latter work was written in Toronto, and illustrated with photo-zincographed fac-similes of his own pen and ink drawings, wherein the crisp touch and manipulative etching style of the engraver is most cleverly exhibited—a style never attempted in penned-drawings. The 'Reminiscences" are delightful gossipy sketches of his own romantic town, abounding in rarely-flavoured

antiquarian, legendary, and historical lore, in which the author identifies himself with exquisite sympathy, revelling in loving abandonment with his subject. In the year 1845, Dr Wilson had the singular good fortune to discover and rescue the ancient and beautiful Norman chapel of St Margaret, in Edinburgh Castle, from the degraded condition of an ordnance lumber store, to which it had been subjected for hundreds of years; its ecclesiastical character being unknown for many generations till this period. The complete restoration of this eleventh-century oratory, so rich in historical associations, was satisfactorily effected in 1853. His other works are– "Oliver Cromwell and the Protectorate," published in 1848; "The Archæology and Pre-historic Annals of Scotland" (1851); "Pre-historic Man;" "Researches into the origin of Civilisation in the Old and New Worlds," published in 1863; "Chatterton: a Biographical Study" (1869); and "Caliban" (1873).

His brother, Dr George Wilson, was an eminent scientist, whose miscellaneous writings are well known under the title of "Religis Chemici." He was for many years Professor of Technology in the University of Edinburgh, and was much beloved as a man and honoured as a philosopher. His most popular works are "The Five Gateways of Knowledge," and "Researches in Colour Blindness."

Our Scoto-Canadian poet still worthily fills the professorial chair of History and English Literature at Toronto, and occasionally revisits his native city and country, to which he is passionately attached.

THE SCOT ABROAD.

Oh to be in Scotland now,
When ths mellow autumn smiles
So pleasantly on knoll and howe,
Where from rugged cliff and heathy brow
Of each mountain height you look down defiles
Golden with the harvest's glow.

Oh to be in the kindly land,
Whether mellow autumn smile or no;
It is well if the joyous reaper stand
Breast deep in the yellow corn, sickle in hand,
But I care not though sleety east winds blow,
So long as I tread its strand.

To be wandering there at will,
Be it sunshine or rain, or its winds that brace,
To climb the old familiar hill,
Of the storied landscape to drink my fill,
And look out on the grey old tower at its base
And linger a dreamer still.

Ah! weep ye not for the dead,
The dear ones safe in their native earth,
There fond hands pillowed the narrow bed
Where fresh gowans, star-like, above their head
Spangle the turf of each spring's new birth
For the living loving tread.

Ah! not for them, doubly blest,
Safely home and past all weeping,
Hushed and still, there closely pressed
Kith to kin, on one mother's breast;
All still, securely, trustfully sleeping
As in their first cradled rest.

Weep rather, aye weep sore,
For him who departs to a distant land,
There are pleasant homes on the far off shore,
Friends too, but not like the friends of yore,
That fondly, but vainly, beckoning stand
For him who returns no more.

Oh to lie in Scottish earth,
Lapped in the clods of its kindly soil,
Where the soaring laverock's song has birth
In the welkin blue; and its heavenward mirth
Lends a rapture to earth born toil—
What matter! death recks not the dearth.

THE WITHERED FLOWER.

The flowers o' the summer time,
A' in brown-leaf shrouds are lying;
The nor' wind is swirling the driven snaw,
An' tossing the white flakes or e'er they fa',
To hide where a' lay a dying;—
But my flower is withered an' winna re-bloom!

The birks in the erie glen
Their leafless bows a' wide are tossing;
The sough frae the upland forest seems
As in wild faem a thousand mountain streams
Frae rock to den were crossing;—
An' my flower is withered an' winna re-bloom.

The spring maun return again,
Opening the fresh buds o' ilka flower,
Drappin' the gowans o'er straith an' lea;
Buskin' wi' blossom ilk buss an' tree,
Blessing a' nature wi' walth o' dower;—
But my flower is withered an' winna re-bloom.

Till ance this waefu' warld
Its last flowers a' withered, its ways a' toom,
An' nought for a lap to the lanesome dying,
But the graves whar death's latest plenish is lying,
Steerin' to wake at the trump o' doom;—
Then my flower though withered shall again rebloom

THE FLOWER UNBLOWN.

Lay her gently in the mould,
O wherefore mourn her gone?
How could so fair a flower unfold
In the soil Death trod upon?
Why o'er the daisied hillock weep?
Dreamless and sweet is our baby's sleep.

O fragrant as the south wind's breath,
That dreams in the leafy trees,

With the violet's kisses, all faint to death—
Are her storied memories.
Dear Lord, thou hast beckoned our darling hence,
Teach us therein love's recompense.

C. J. SHERER,

AUTHOR of a volume of genuine poetry, entitled "Poems and Fragments," by "Charles James," published in 1884, by Mr Gardner, Paisley, was born at Ardrossan in 1849. His father was a shipbuilder and shipowner, and well known in the district. Our poet commenced his education at the Ardrossan Public School (having previously acquired his "letters" at a dame school in the town), where he remained until the age of twelve. He was then transferred to Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, and after studying four and a half years there, he attended the Arts Classes in Glasgow University for four sessions. Subsequently Mr Sherer visited Göttengen, Berlin, and Paris, for the purpose of studying the languages and literature of France and Germany. Since then he has resided chiefly at Ardrossan. He has been an invalid, and laid aside entirely from work since 1878, and it is only lately that a slight improvement in his health has enabled him to bear the fatigue of publishing a selection of his sweetly melodious and highly-toned poetical thoughts. These poems were all written previous to his health giving way, and he has been prevented by ill-health from farther following his fine literary taste. "Poems and Fragments" met with the warmest praise by the leading "reviews" and newspapers. The *Literary World* spoke of "Mr James'" "Perfect Woman," which we give below, as a poem

that "might sit down with Wordsworth's, or with 'that not impossible she' of an earlier poet, and feel at home in their high company;" the *Spectator* said "the spirit of the master has been caught in a way that can call forth nothing but praise. There are lines which it is no flattery to describe as genuinely Shakespearian;" while the *Academy* found "strength everywhere, and in certain places the strength amounts to exceptional power." The selection we give will amply sustain the high opinion here expressed. We regret being unable to give a sample of the poet's longer pieces. These show a gentle, reverent, and sympathetic spirit, deep pathos, and tender beauty; and we find everywhere present the cultured mind and the true poet finding utterance in sweet images of poetic fancy.

Our first selection forms the introduction and closing lines of the poem

IN A VILLAGE CHURCHYARD.

Ay! here they lie, laid in their dreamless sleep,
Each with his stone that, like a garrulous friend,
Doth spread abroad the records of his life.
They have lived their little day, and now they are
As hostages to Death, and signs whereon
We stake redemption; witnesses of Time,
Whose lights are out, and here are cast aside
As burnt-out candles, lamps that have no oil;
Unmindful tenants that have gone away,
Leaving us here their garments for a sign.
How strange a stillness hangs upon this spot!
Here Death has gather'd in his husbandry,
Flowret and weed alike; here, wearied ones,
Leas'd from their toil, in peacefulness they lie,
Like sleeping children nestl'd side by side.

Here they have found the peace they did so seek
Thro' all the restless turmoil of their lives,
Each in the likeness of his calling; here
The soldier hath his tent; the mariner
His haven shielded from the vengeful storm,
The child its crib, the unstrung labourer
The simple couch that toil hath made so sweet.

How are they turned to laughter ; where are now
Their weighty counsels and their cunning schemes,
Their sage devices, their deep-ponder'd plots,
Their ledgers and their learnéd folios,
Their teeming argosies, their merchandise,
Their spacious stores bursting with husbandry ?
Why, what a discord do such matters now
Make with the stillness of their present sleep !

The place is holy, sacred from the tears
That grief hath shed upon its heedless soil ;
And yet they were forgotten, ere that these
Had trickl'd to the darkness of their cells.

. . . . . .

How doth Life's river turn to stagnant pools,
And lose the fresher current of its force
In these dull shallows ? Thus Thought's eager flight
Is burden'd by the weight of circumstance,
And all the natural pulses of our blood
Are bounded by a drowsy discontent :
Thus each day's life lives in the doom of time,
And Death is but the passing of a thought.
Things do partake of such unnatural state,
That our dull'd souls do stagger in a dream
And lose discussion of the present time,
Which was not so before. What is't to live ?
It is to know and do, and in the deed
To make the thought partaker of the end,
For thought is life ; to treasure up our days,
Counting the hours like pearls on a string,
Seeking to make of each a fragrant urn
Wherein to lay embalm'd some gracious deed
Or hint of noble enterprise ; it is
To walk in silence, conscious of great ends ;
To love truth, to be patient, bearing much,
And calm and full of faith,—not to be great,
But to live greatly, making of our lives
Such record as may live in after days ;
And seeing in our cold and natural life,
Tho' blurr'd with tears and stain'd with earthly dust,
The mortal counterpart of that far state
Whose promise is the solace of our pain.

THE PERFECT WOMAN.

She shall be
As is a flower, so born in purity,
And in her virtues boundless as the air ;
Girt up with fear, fenc'd round with chastity,
Rounded in wisdom, perfect as a star.

Reverence shall wait upon her steps, and Love
Shall clothe her like a garment; on her brow
Shall Truth sit smiling, like the watchful star
That hangs upon the forehead of the Eve.

A great simplicity shall mark her ways,
And bind the linkéd actions of her time;
Tears shall lie near the surface of her life;
Infinite Pity, like a living spring,
Shall bubble in the silence of her heart;
Her soul shall hunger with an awful wish,
And all the pulses of her being yearn
To mitigate the sorrows of her kind.

Calm-eyed and patient, never speaking ill,
And slow to speak wherein she cannot praise;
Faith, never dim, shall guide her feet, and Hope
Shall brood upon her being like a dove;
And over all, like benediction's calm,
Shall all her paths be lit by Charity;
Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three, yet so
As Charity is greatest, so shall she
Be known by Charity.

FOUND DEAD.

There, like a sculptur'd monument, she lay,
Silent and cold; upon her brow was laid
A brightness and a shadow; still'd was all
That once had throbb'd so joyfully in tune;
The pulse that did so musically beat
In fullest harmony; the patient heart
That, sorely stricken, like a wounded bird,
Had droop'd and flutter'd faintly to its rest;
The closéd eyes that, like imprison'd stars,
Had burned so gladly;—there was only left
The likeness and the vesture of the soul;—
A broken instrument, whereon no more
Could any sound be made; a stately house,
Wherein the lights were suddenly gone out;
A worthless shell, whereof the pearl was ta'en;—
For Death had stolen, like a thief in the night,
And ta'en away the Life.

FRAGMENT.

The gorgeous splendours of the dying sun,
The solemn majesty of silent hills,
The music of the winds, the moaning woods,
The far-off raving of sad autumn seas,
The mingling symphony of sea and land;—

These are the voices whereby Nature speaks
Unto the soul in solemn harmony ;
And they that see and hear, and are not mov'd,
Their souls are dead and like to wither'd leaves,
Their eyes like candles in the noonday sun,
Their ears like caverns full of empty sounds.

A SUNSET PICTURE.

Blood-red as a fiery meteor sank the sun of evening down,
Slowly settling to its ending o'er the little German town.

Slowly as with ling'ring footsteps towards the distant ridge it pass'd,
Ere it fell, a backward look athwart the little town it cast.

Lo ! the village glowed before it, flushing red beneath its rays ;
Blushing, joyous as a maiden when she meets her lover's gaze.

Like enchantment was the flood that hover'd like a waking dream ;
Every feature chang'd and glowing in the glory of its gleam.

Every roof a crimson banner floated on the air afar ;
Every vane was lambent lightning playing round about a star.

Every tree was dipp'd in purple, every window flam'd with gold ;
Every stream was molten fire, seething in a burning mould.

Slowly from the silent landscape ebbed the flashing sea of light,
Like a gorgeous veil of splendour slowly furl'd from the sight.

Slowly, as tho' all unwilling, closed the fiery eye of day ;
And the scene, like Cinderella, reassumed it sober grey.

Silent, happy, lay the town as rapt in adoration still ;
Slowly sinking to its slumbers 'neath the shadow of the hill.

Till the light began to pale and glimmer in the crystal West ;
And the village, like a toiler 'leased from labour, sank to rest.

A FAREWELL.

Farewell ! for the hour is arisen,
The hour that we fear'd ;
And the gleam that illumin'd our prison
Has all disappeared.
It has vanish'd from roof-tree and ceiling,
It has died on the wall,
And the gloom of a desolate feeling
Is over us all.

Like the star that the Dawn brings in gladness
Thou did'st rise on our day ;
Like the star that the Eve wears in sadness
Thou dost vanish away.
We are shipwreck'd in darkness and sorrow
On a desolate shore,
And the dread of the darker to-morrow
Is worse than before.

Farewell ! thou hast sweeten'd our labour,
Thou hast lighten'd our load,
And the joy thou did'st bring as a neighbour
Hath shorten'd the road ;
Thou hast led to our sorrowful dwelling
Sweet sunshine and light,
To our day songs of happiness telling,
And stars to our night.

Still, in thought, we will follow thy going
Through long weary years,
As we now mark thy form fainter growing
Through eyes dim with tears ;
Like the gleam of a dying emotion
Far over the land ;
Now the day-star hath sunk in the ocean,
And the night is at hand.

EVENING MUSINGS.

O night ! thou blottest out the colouring
Wherewith the golden day is picturing
A bounding range of changing loveliness,
And yet thy colouring doth no less express
An infinite beauty ; in thy ebon pall
Wherewith, as in a shroud, thou wrappest all,
Gems sparkle, that beseem one led
Royally to the nupital bed !
Oh raise our thoughts and teach us to discern
What perfect beauty springeth from the stern
And loathsome grave ; oh bid thy stars shine out
Like hope, above the dead, till not a doubt
Mar the deep beauty of their memory ;
Till in each buried dear one, love descry
A harvest treasure, ripening for the sky ;
A seedling flower th' All-loving purposeth
To garner in the grave until he perfecteth
Bright life-buds, by the ministry of Death.
O Earth ! Earth ! for as busy as thou art
At pleasure's shrine, or in the crowded mart,
And for as beautiful, why thy blue sky
Shedding dews for the flowers so lovingly ;

And for as firm, the everlasting hills
Weeping their very tears in hurrying rills,
That change themselves to rivers, and rush on
From the grey east to the declining sun,
And seek their slumber only in the motion
Upon the bosom of the restless ocean!
O Mother Earth! for all thou seem'st so stable,
Me seems, of all thy children, none are able
To find a rest, save only those are hiding
Safe under cover, in the grave abiding.
I'll build me rather where the clouds are dipping
Their fringes in the west; the sun, though sleeping,
Smiles on them there; I'll build me there my mansion,
Where thought shall dwell, and know no apprehension
Of tears save such as rainbow clouds shall weep,
Nor sighs, save of the zephyrs as they sweep
Sweetly adown the west, into the bowers
Soul-consecrated for her holy hours
Of meditation; where the Evening pale
Lists to the love-song of the nightingale,
Till the thoughts, ravished with the melody,
Wander unconscious from the minstrelsy
To lose themselves in holier reverie.

LOVE'S WITHERED WREATH.

Stretched all his length upon a sunny bank,
A youth lay plucking at the flowers around,
The which he flung about in childish prank
Until half buried in the flowery mound,
Whose odorous blossoms littered all the ground;
And then in wayward mirth he strove amain,
All laughingly, the leaves to gather up again.

Then sitting down with staid and serious face,
He set himself to twine a rosy wreath;
Yet still inconstantly would join the chase
If chanced a butterfly to cross the heath;
Yet back would laughing come, all out of breath,
And set himself to task, with serious air,
His wreathed coronal of flowers to weave and wear.

And so time wended with the merry boy,
All through the changes of a summer's day;
Yet seemed the lonely revel not to cloy,
But still by fits he laughed and fell to play.
Then gravely platted at the flowers away,
Until, alternate daisy, brier, and heath,
He knit into a band, and crowned himself therewith.

Whereat he rose, and looked about him then,
Spying the lengthening shadows of the eve,
And seemed as one unconsciously o'erta'en,
And gathering up a bow and arrow-sheaf,
That lay half-buried beneath flower and leaf,
He turned him toward the sun's declining light,
And spread, in haste, his wings, prepared for homeward flight.

Then first, all stern and stark, there met his eye,
An aged man, that had been looking on,
At sight of whom he gazed full tristfully,
And snatched it off, and strove to hide his crown,
Whereat Death sternly claimed it for his own,
'Earth's flowers are mine!' he said, 'even Love's own wreath
Fades to a royal garland for the brow of Death!'

Upon whose touch, the flowers, as struck by blight,
Dropped from his hand, all withered to the ground,
Which Love picked up, and, weeping at the sight,
He smoothed the shriveled leaves, and waved it round,
Then clasped it to his breast, and, with a bound,
Sprung from the earth, and, soaring, heavenward flew,
While the dead leaves distilled such fragrant dew,
That all the air was filled with odours they outthrew.

MARGARET RUSSELL DOW,

A POETESS whose sweet thoughts and pleasant literary style recall Horatius Bonar or Frances R. Havergal, is the only daughter of the late Mr John Dow, W.S., and sister to the Rev. John Archibald Dow, B.D., minister of the parish of Strathmiglo, in the county of Fife, with whom she resides.

Miss Dow is a native of Edinburgh, where she was educated. At the age of nineteen she began writing verses on scenes in the country, and in 1871 she wrote a small volume entitled "The Reformation and other Poems," which was published by Andrew

Elliot, Edinburgh. About the year 1882, a volume, entitled "Lays for Leisure Hours," was also published by Mr Elliot. This work was very favourably noticed by the press. It contains poems on scenery and natural objects, short pieces on "comfort," historical verses, sacred lays, and poems for the young. Miss Dow has contributed to several magazines and newspapers, among which may be mentioned the *Christian Treasury*, *British Messenger*, and the *Juvenile Magazine* of the Church of Scotland. Purity of thought and grace of diction characterise her poems, and she draws lessons calculated to strengthen and beautify life from the simplest objects in Nature. In the words of one of her reviewers, who also refers to the variety of subject and style displayed in her "Lays":—"The historical sketches evidence an intimate and intelligent acquaintance with the Book, as all the smaller pieces—the sacred lays and hymns—testify to the inspiring and guiding influence of the spirit of its teaching, free as they are from the slightest sectarianism, and illustrating in every line faith, hope, and charity."

Many of Miss Dow's hymns might well be set to music. When it is one of the significant signs of the times that a prominent place is given in our worship to praise, they would worthily take the place of not a few at present in use. Hymns and hymnology were never before so closely identified with our Church life, and every denomination has now its own book of praise. In England hymns had always played an important part in divine worship, but in recent years, says a writer on the subject, the various Presbyterian Churches in Scotland "have been so influenced by this spirit of song that they have each and all produced hymn books characterised by much catholicity of taste and true understanding of the purpose and function of song in the service of the sanctuary." In this respect the breath of a new

spiritual life has been playing over the dry bones of our time-honoured public order of Divine service, and clothing it with a garment of beauty.

MUSIC.

I love the leafy shade
That screens from scorching rays,
Where songsters serenade
With sweet and soothing lays,
Till sinks the sun to rest,
And silence reigns o'er all!
I love in yonder West,
To see the Twilight fall.
O strike the Lyre more softly still,
For mournful thoughts my bosom fill.

While joyful notes make sad
The sorrow-stricken heart;
The softer notes make glad,
And soothing power impart.
The morn's first golden beam
That crowns the tender flower,
The clear and murmuring stream,
To raise my heart have power.
Touch light the Lyre, I love it still,
And happier thoughts my bosom fill.

In listening to its song,
It gives my heart release,
At close of day I long
To welcome soothing peace.
When ills our homes assail,
And flood the stream of life,
With God we cannot fail
To conquer in the strife.
Come, strike the lyre now louder still,
For joyful thoughts my bosom fill.

OUR COUNTRY.

Let Britain truth and peace maintain;
She stands among the nations high,
As tower her mountains o'er the main
In beauty and in majesty.

Let Britain's sons of freedom boast,
Their brave exploits are themes for song;
Aye foremost in the battle's host,
They shield from foes like bulwarks strong.

Let Britain's daughters lend their aid,
And youth inspire for noble deeds ;
'Twas Christian mothers heroes made ;
Of truth and worth they sowed the seeds.

Let Britain with the nations vie
In science and in skilful art ;
Her commerce brings the far-off nigh,
And links the nations to her heart.

THE LAND OF MY HOME.

I love o'er the land of my fathers to roam,
Their much loved abode, and my own native home ;
The isle of the free, and the home of the true,
With landscapes of beauty entrancing my view.

Beloved are her mountains, beloved are her plains ;
Her power is unyielding to foreign lands' chains ;
O'er ocean her banners exultingly wave ;
Her bulwarks are fenced with the hearts of the brave.

What makes her unrivalled ? what gives her a name ?
And whence her great power and her far-spreading fame ?
The standard of truth is unfurled on her shores,
Its blessings unending on nations she pours.

A SCENE IN AUTUMN,

NEAR THE RIVER EARN.

How bright the day ! the lovely sky serene
Is spangled with the fleecy clouds at rest,
In wave-like streaks and varied fancy forms,
While hills around lend grandeur to the scene.
The fields are studded with their golden sheaves,
Against their fragile prop the weary rest,
And stealthily of them the gleaners pluck,
Till by the reapers they are gathered home.

The deep, clear Earn now gently windeth by,
Her waters carry blessings on their way.
A rural cottage, under shady trees,
O'erlooks her banks and shares her bounties free.
Their children round and round it laughing play,
While merry breezes rustle through the trees ;
And there the poultry seek their welcome food :
The patient horse with measured step moves on,
Content to draw the burdens on him laid,
Till carts are placed on end with wheels at rest.

The cottage stands a landmark of the past ;
Its tenants change, who, with unwearied toil,
Bring in the autumn treasures to their home
With gladsome hearts, and with a cheerful song ;
And rear new stacks, the crown of harvest home.
And some who dwelt within that house, who sat
Beneath the sheltering trees at noon, and viewed
Their verdant beauty with delight, are gone ;
And while the river flows in beauty still,
Successive generations pass away.

SUNBEAMS.

Happy sunbeams, dance away,
Sparkle o'er the waters bright,
Crown the waves with diamonds gay,
Touch them with a brilliant light.

Give to great, and give to small,
Joy and gladness every day ;
Spread your blessings over all,
As you hasten on your way.

Come, the lonely valleys cheer,
Hills with beauty fresh adorn ;
Dry the floweret's dewdrop tear,
Bless with hope the early morn.

May our light like yours arise,
Blessing lives opprest with care ;
Shining through grief's clouded skies,
Shedding brightness everywhere.

SUNRISE ON A SABBATH MORN.

Hail, Sabbath morn ! so fraught with bliss to man ;
All Nature is in harmony with thee ;
To lovely skies the smiling earth responds,
To welcome in the day that God hath made,
The morn our Saviour from the grave arose.
Behold the sun in glorious splendour rise
With spreading beams to give his light to all—
An emblem of God's faithfulness and love.
Life's stir hath ceased awhile ; the ocean too
Is still, reminding us of rest above,
Where troubled waters will be seen no more.
With heaven-born calm the earth and sky are filled :
To souls enraptured with their speechless praise,
A foretaste will be given of welcome peace,
A lasting peace, when heaven and earth shall be
Renewed, and Sabbath of eternity
Shall dawn with universal joy and praise !

A LOST TOY.

I saw twa bairnies fu' o' glee ;
  Adoon the burnie's banks they ran,
  An' wistfu' lookit noo an' than,
Their lost an' longed-for toy to see.

At last they saw it floatin' near,
  An' stretched their handies oot to catch,
  An' strave wha wad be first to snatch
The bonnie plaything hadden dear.

Their wee feet slippit, doon they fell,
  They cried for help, and struggled sair ;
  But, oh ! nae hand to help was there,
And baith were drooned. The waters' swell

Did sunder each frae ither's grasp ;
  The ane was drifted doon the burn,
  The ither stuck at ilka turn :
Its cauld, wee hand the toy did clasp.

'Twas mammie's gift their last birthday,
  'Twas daddie's handwork wrocht wi' care ;
  And noo the cause of sorrow sair,
For he wha grasped it lifeless lay.

The sad news brocht a dark clud owre
  Their hame, for baith the bairns were gane ;
  An' fresh like rosebuds they were ta'en
By death's cauld hand that fatal hour.

There cam' a rap ; Jean lookit up ;
  "Jim, open quick," she faintly said ;
  An' baith shook sair wi' grief an' dread,
Yet meekly took the bitter cup.

A' weet, the bodies hame were brocht
  By neebour Bob, wha side by side
  The twinnies laid, an' syne to hide
His fa'in' tears he vainly socht.

But, oh ! what words can tell the grief
  That rested owre their darkened hame,—
  It was to them nae mair the same,
An' nane could gie their hearts relief.

The mither's heart was wae an' sair ;
  An' bent wi' grief she stappit ben
  To tak' anither look again,
As lang's she had their bodies there.

The day an' waefu' hour cam' roond
To lay the wee things to their rest,
Whase spirits dwall amang the blest,
Where nocht but joyfu' praises sound.

Kind frien's an' neebours gathered there,
An' knotted round the cottage door ;
The minister was there afore,
To lift their hearts to God in prayer.

Syne, as they raise an' slowly moved,
An' bore the twa wee coffins oot,
The neebour bairnies grat aboot,
For mickle they the twinnies lo'ed.

The lanely parents toiling gaed ;
Their hearts wi' sorrow sair were riven,
But aye they raised their thochts to heaven,
An' tears let fa', tho' nocht they said.

Their hearth was blank o' ilk wee chair ;
Their bonnie bird noo seldom sang,
An', O, the days were drear an' lang
Sin' Willie played wi' Jamie there.

FRANCIS LENNON,

A WRITER of pleasing domestic sketches and poems on various subjects, was born at Townhead, Glasgow, in 1857. He was for some years a pupil teacher, and on leaving school he endeavoured to enter Her Majesty's Customs as an out-door officer, but was unsuccessful. He is presently employed in one of the city warehouses. Our poet has contributed verses to the Glasgow and other newspapers for the past twelve years. These have commended themselves to many on account of their sympathetic nature, and their thoughtful and reflective spirit.

A HOOSE O' YER AIN.

How dull an' how sad it is stayin'
Whaur freedom is batter'd an' slain ;
There's contentment an' pleasure in haein'
A bonnie clean hoose o' yer ain.

Yer watched an' yer troubled by neebours,
An' lookit upon wi' disdain ;
Let ilka ane gain by their labours
A cosy bit hoose o' their ain,

There's peace an' there's comfort in roamin'
To or frae toil a' alane,
Or glance thro' the panes in the gloamin'
Frae a bonnie wee hoose o' yer ain.

The warld, it may mock yer proceedin's,
Or drive ye within despair's flame—
Heedna, but support a' yer needin's
In a bonnie clean hoose o' yer ain.

THE BAIRNIE ON YER KNEE.

When bleating anguish has approached on sorrow's vivid wing,
An' turmoil reigns on ilka side, 'mid labour's dolefu' ring ;
When nature's sunk in gloominess, an' a' aroon' is strife,
What thrangs the heart wi' constant joy mair than a cheerfu' wife ?
No her alane, but gaze upon the wee thing lyin' there ;
How sweet an' innocent it lies, an' rests sae free frae care ;
The weary min' can fin' relief, though tears burst frae the e'e,
In liltin' up an' doon wi' pride the bairnie on yer knee.

Ilk nicht when daily wark is dune ye hurry hame wi' glee,
Nae thochts o' heavy toil surround the brain sae calm an' free ;
The coal-black face looks nocht ava, as thoosan's hae the same,
And as the hame ye enter in ye can descry the wean,
The wifie greets ye wi' thae smiles as nature sae allowed ;
Fu' weel she kens yer labour's sair, an' did afore ye wooed.
Yer han's are washed, the supper's doon, but, hech, just bide awee,
There's something else awantin'—that's the bairnie on yer knee.

Though toil has set me in the toon, far frae a' rural scenes,
The beauties o' my native hills come pleasant in my dreams ;
The silvery lochs, the massive moors, an' fields o' culture grand—
I lo'e abune a' sunny climes my ain dear heather land.
But still my heart's warm, fond desires cling to the anes at hame—
Nocht dearer to me than to view the bairnie stan alane ;

Oh, joyous raptures heap the soul wi' noblest harmonie
Gazin' on that image meek an' chaste—the bairnie on yer knee.

THE ORPHAN'S WAIL.

Cold blows the breeze, and the wind it is howling,
And the dark clouds are spreading to bring on the night,
The storm on the ocean is fiercely growling,
Whilst the poor lonely orphan lies crouched low in fright;
She cries for her mother, but she is not near her,
She calls for her father in a voice shrill and deep,
The tempest's loud roaring, there is nothing to cheer her,
Yet, child of misfortune, 'tis useless to weep.

Mourn not, my maiden, mourn not in your sorrow,
Think not upon the true friends cold and dead,
Rouse up your heart, and have joy on the morrow,
Raise up that weary and weak bending head;
The world may not aid you, or lead you from wailing,
The world it may mock you, still struggle away,
Perhaps noble fortune beside you is sailing,
And will outspread its mantle on some future day.

GEORGE EYRE.

ONE of our most talented Scottish reviewers, in criticising the maiden volume of our present poet, says:—"If this is the initial effort of its author, as we assume it to be, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it one of the most striking and hopeful of the tentatives that have reached us in recent years." George Eyre, author of "The Lady of Ranza. and other Poems," published in 1884 by Mr Gardner, Paisley, and "The Sage of Thebes," published by Mr Elliot Stock, London, in 1885, was born in 1862 near Govan, in Renfrewshire. His mother and only brother died while he was yet a child. At a very early age books became his dearest companions, and shortly after entering the Glasgow High School, and

while yet in his fourteenth year, he wrote the poem which gives a name to his first volume. It was at first the wish of his father that George should receive a university training, but as our poet did not then see any advantage to be gained by further "schooling," he decided to go into business, at which he still remains—a "worshipper of Apollo serving in the kitchen of Pluto."

The author says, of his first volume, "The Lady of Ranza," "I felt that it would not stand very high as an artistic work, but I liked the tale of kind hearts, which are 'more than coronets,' for the memories it brought to me of days and dreams and joys gone by, and so determined that it should be the name-piece of my first book." The *Scottish Review* spoke of the poem as being "as pretty a piece of romance as we have read for many a day," but we think it is in his short, fervent, and self-embodied poems that Mr Eyre is seen to best advantage as a poet of deep feeling and great promise. In the words of the *Christian Leader*, some of the lyrics "are almost as dainty as anything in Herrick, and were they wedded to fitting music could not fail to become popular favourites." His latest volume gives ample evidence of progress, and his capacity for higher flights. Altogether, the Muse of Mr Eyre exhibits a rich depth of pathos, a tender sweetness, and a quiet beauty that bring it within the scale of genuine poetry, and give promise of unusual excellence.

IN CITY PENT.

No glorious sky and sea,
  But city walls
  Where shadow falls
Around encompass me.

No loving one have I,
  Sister or wife:
  Bright things of life
Do not around me lie.

My day in toil is spent
Above a street
Where countless feet
On pleasure pass intent.

And from my window place
Sometimes I see
Look up at me
Some fair, unwearied face.

Fair, happy ones whose lot
Is softly cast
Where care is past
And canker cometh not.

And at the even chime,
When others hie
To bright homes, I
Pass but a lonely time.

Till often, ere I sleep,
Of wild desire
My heart takes fire—
I wish that I could weep.

Yet sometimes with my pen
I sit and dream,
And soft eyes seem
To gaze upon me then.

Nor would I change my lot
In such an hour
Of pensive power
For wealth that dreameth not.

CHATTERTON'S LAST HOURS.

Why should I live? The world is not my friend.
Who weeps when dies the tongue, its words unsaid,
That would have warmed cold hearts, made bright eyes bend
To pity. Who shall care, when I am dead,

Whether the world is colder for the loss
Of one poor poet though his heart was true,
And warm with fire that might have burned the dross
Out of some hearts, lit some dead aims anew!

Who cares for higher aims and visions brighter?
Let young ideas seek a useful vent!
We live by precepts of an older writer—
With what our fathers thought we are content.

Each for his selfish ends, merchant and lord,
Year in year out, toil, or for treasure's gain,
Or the poor prefix of a senseless word;
The world is poorer by their bread in vain.

Once in a hundred years a prophet rises
Burning with other zeal—clear eyes, true heart;
And the old shell of crusted lies surprises—
Chains fall off at his touch, dark stains depart,

And spirits bent and weary with earth's toil
Arise refreshed as if with heaven's rain.
He sows his heart's blood in a selfish soil,
And reaps neglect and madness for his pain.

Would he whose soul is but a ledger weep
If the Power died that spreads the blossoms out
And bids the Summer come? He still might keep
What he had gathered—still might trade on doubt.

And the pale poet, lent to earth to spread
Through life the fairer flowers of love and truth,
Uncared for in his attic may lie dead,
Slain by the vampire, Greed, that feeds on youth.

TILL THE SUN WENT DOWN.

The sunlight slept and the millstream ran,
And the miller's daughter was fair to see.
"O nought care I for boy or man!
O happy am I and fancy free!"
And the face beside her to cloud began,
For a light and careless air sang she.

The sunlight slept and the millstream ran,
And the miller's daughter was fair to see.
And still she sang "Nor boy nor man
E'er has been pain of a thought to me!"
And his face beside her was vexed and wan,
And he bade goodbye. "Goodbye!" laughed she.

The sun was down and the millwheel stopped;
Still the miller's daughter was fair to see.
Of a sudden the paper before her dropped,
And a sharp and terrible cry gave she.
Her heart's wild beat like the millwheel stopped:
"He is dead—they have killed him! and he loved me!"

BEFORE AND AFTER.

A word, a touch, a glance, a smile,
A vision of beauty, a dream of bliss,
A wild suspense, a maddening while,
A low response and a rapturous kiss.

A darkening room, a flickering fire,
A motionless muser, a deep drawn sigh,
A lonely heart, a lost desire
And an aching remembrance of bliss gone by.

SHADOW.

Wild as a harp that Æolian rings
Had I desired to have sung to thee,
But a spirit of sadness has breathed on the strings,
And the voices of music are mournful to me.

Sweetly the lark in the heavens can sing,
Rapt in the blue of the quivering air,
But his melody ceases when down on the wing,
To the earth he descends, fear and sadness lurk there.

Brightly the stream in its mountainous home
Sparkles rejoicing through bracken and glen,
But its gladness is gone, with its sparkle and foam,
When it winds through the plain 'mid the dwellings of men.

Glad thus my spirit when high to the stars
Hope bears it up through the clouds that unroll,
But it droops, like a bird, when it beats on the bars
Of the world, and a shadow sweeps over my soul.

SAILING.

Slowly, slowly, sailing, sailing,
Down the river drifted we,
And the wild wind wailing, wailing,
Fled away upon our lee.
Overhead a gull was railing;
Willows in the wave were trailing,
As we slowly, sailing, sailing,
Drifted down toward the sea.

Was this then my day dream's ending?
Was my summer idyll done?
I'd been earnest; she'd been spending
Only pastime in the sun.

Siren-sweet her voice was lending
Passion to my passion's rending,
For she, o'er the lilies bending,
Heedless hummed an idle tune.

Softly o'er us swept the sighing
Of the West wind sad and lone,
And it brought the gray clouds flying
Ever Eastward to its moan.
Sighed the willows low replying,
While a wild swan, lonely dying,
Sadly sang her death song, hieing
To the dim remote unknown.

Darker drove the cloud-wrack o'er us;
Cliffs arose on either hand:
Leaden waters rolled before us,
Sullen through the wintry land.
Swifter, swifter on they bore us,
Mid the wild and stormy chorus
Of the waves and winds that o'er us
Whistled to the dreary strand.

From the rifted cloud the lightning
Flashed upon the livid tide,
And the thunder's roar was frightening
The warm bosom by my side,
For her cheek was slowly whitening,
And her hand on mine was tightening:
Mid the storm one ray was brightening:
Careless I for aught beside.

Wilder wailed the wind and weirder;
Faster drove our shallop on;
Broken was the helm that steered her;
Wind and tide were guides alone.
Closer clung my love: I cheered her,
Trembling for the fate that neared her.
And the wind wailed wilder, weirder,
As our shallop hurried on.

Flashed the lightning, rolled the thunder,
Down the current wild we flew,
Seabirds shrieked around in wonder,
Cliffs, rocks, trees shot past our view
In the distance—ah it stunned her!
Roared the rapids loud as thunder.
On we rushed the black clouds under,
And the wind demoniac grew.

Mid the noise of winds and waters
Quivering now her voice I heard:—

"I am one of Eve's own daughters!
I am ruined by a word!"
Tenderly my own hand sought her's.
Even now my spirit totters,
As it sees the seething waters—
Hears again the voice it heard.

In her eyes the tears were starting—
"It was I, love, wrought thee this!
Death, for love so true, imparting!"
On her lips I sealed a kiss.
Meant it union? meant it parting?
One fire through our souls was darting—
Wildly was our shallop starting
Down the torrent's dark abyss.

Gone was all the careless spirit,
Grave and tender was her face.
Woman's love lies hid, but stir it,
Warm and true it shows its place.
Dark the thought, yet we could bear it—
Death was near us—we should share it—
Wild my heart beat, I could hear it
As we ran that fearful race.

Down the rapids white with fury
Shot our shallop madly free;
Round a beetling promontory
Swift as swallow darted we:
From a cloud dark, lowering, hoary,
Burst a crash of livid glory—
One was left to tell the story—
One was lonely on the sea.

WILLIAM HALL

WAS born in Galashiels in 1825. He came of a race of weavers on the paternal side, while his maternal grandfather, William Purdie, was well-know as the fisherman at Abbotsford Ferry. When only eight years of age, William assisted the weavers at "taking in their webs," and for some years later worked at the mills, attending school, like our modern

"half-timers," part of each day. About the age of fourteen, he was engaged by John Oliver, gamekeeper, Langlee—a remarkable man, a perfect library in himself of Scottish history and Border lore. He had personally known Hogg, and first gave our poet the impulse to write verse. This was just the sort of life that suited his early roving disposition. He was afterwards in the service of several gentlemen, including Lord Polwarth and Mr Lippincott. With the latter he went to England, and was in his service nearly twelve years. Being on a visit to Brighton, he made the acquaintance of a chemist, who showed him some daguerreotype photographs. He learned the art, purchased the necessary apparatus, and has practised the calling of photography in Brighton ever since.

Mr Hall is a frequent contributor to several of the English and Scottish newspapers. His poetry has a fervent patriotic ring, and gives evidence of a devout and intelligent appreciation of the beauties of nature.

A SPRIG OF HEATHER.

Bring me a sprig of heather
From the hills I love so well;
Where the blackcock wakes the morning
O'er the blooming heather bell.
And the lark with seraph fervour
Through the mist that hides the sun,
Makes my fond heart swell in longing
For the wilds of Caledon.

Bring me a sprig of heather
From the mountain torrent's brow,
From the rock that guides the cataract
To caverns deep below,
Or from glens by moonlight gleaming,
When the rivulets sing alone,
Swelling holy hymns of Nature,
Through the wilds of Caledon.

Pluck me a sprig of heather,
Near the martyr's lonely grave;

There unseen a sacred fire
Burns round the hallowed brave.
As lightning wings the thunder,
And the winds convulse the sea,
It's to hero patriot fathers
That Caledonia's free.

LIVE AND LET LIVE.

Brave Caledonia! the first in the vanguard
In peace or in battle, on land or on sea;
Sons nursed on the hills, and cradled in heather,
Bold, self-reliant, hope's born in thee.

Tho' scanty the yield of wild glen and moorland,
The toiling wealth-winner has woo'd them to smile;
Blythe, hale, hardy tillers, kind and enduring—
A race of true heroes, the pride of the Isle.

The chief, and the crofter, the laird, and the cotter,
Have long served each other with kindly regard,
But old sacred ties that bound them together
Are broken, and withers the blooming kailyard.

Far be the dark day, when the fiend of distrust,
Hatch'd by foul avarice, creeps unseen thro' the glen
To ruin the homsteads and empty the meal arks
That's made Caledonians—men—muscle and brain.

To live and let live is kind heaven's design;
Loved place of my birth, by nature my home;
Here tied the heart strings that change cannot sever
And nothing but death can extinguish the flame.

Dear lonely shieling, hills mist-capped surrounding,
Where struggled the loved ones gone to the grave;
In that garden of God equality reigns,—
And the mean scourge of earth lies unknown from his slave.

THE TWEED AT BOLDSIDE.

TUNE—*Within a Mile.*

Row me, lassie, row me gently,
Through the rippled silver sheen,
For my heart yet lingers fondly;
Ply the old boat o'er again.
Gentle breezes wafting fragrant

From the woodland and the mead,
Summer's august glories glisten
On the Tweed.
And my heart yet lingers fondly,
Ply the old boat o'er again,
Through the rippled silver sheen
Row mé o'er again
Through the rippled silver sheen,
Row me o'er again.

Sweet the gloaming, still and peaceful,
Blends with moonlight's hallowed gleam,
And the vaulted arch looks blissful
On the mirror moonlit stream;
Here my heart yet lingers fondly,
Row me, lassie, by the shore.
Dreams of memory's visions haunt me
Are no more.

Softly o'er the limpid crystal,
Back the whispered echoes come,
Earthly joys at times celestial,
Are the joys of home, sweet home;
Still I love with love unchanging,
All that ties me to the Tweed,
Charms around the dear old river
Cannot fade.

SAVING THE WRECKED.

The signal gun is heard to boom,
The rocket's lurid glare
Call heroes forth to face the gloom
Of danger and despair.
God save the true, the lifeboat's crew
That dares the billows' roar,
Though fury tossed the surging sea,
They'll bring the wrecked ashore.

The sailors all have bid adieu
To mate and kindred dear,
Sweet home last lingers in their view
And draws the gushing tear.
God save the bark, the sailor's ark,
Guide and defend the brave,
They plough the foaming angry deep
The shipwrecked lost to save.

The parting ship, with tattered sail,
Reels helpless in the storm.

The drowning cry, with bitter wail,
For Mercy's outstretched arm ;
God hear their sigh the landsmen cry,
Help men that ply the oar,
The gallant crew in peril speed,
They'll bring the wrecked ashore.

The dauntless sons of Albion all
To deeds of valour born,
Through wake of death, at duty's call
Will save the hope forlorn.
God save the true, the lifeboat's crew,
That dare the billow's roar,
Though fury tossed the surging sea,
They'll bring the wrecked ashore.

WILLIAM JOSEPH BRADLEY

IS a native of Bridgeton, Glasgow, where he was born in 1857. When only eleven years of age he was sent to work in an iron foundry. He remained there for seven years, when, by an accident, he had the misfortune to lose his right arm. This was a sad blow to the prospects of a young man, but by perseverance and industrious application, he improved his education, which before had been meagre, and was soon able to accept a situation as gate and timekeeper. He still follows that occupation, occasionally contributing cheery lilts and thoughtful poems to the Glasgow and other newspapers, the "Fireside Companion," &c.

OOR AIN WEE JOCK.

A hearty lauchin' bairn
Is oor wee Jock ;
Nae ane wad ever hairm
Oor ain wee Jock ;
Like a bird upon a tree,
He loups an' sings wi' glee,

When on his faither's knee,
Oor ain wee Jock.

A braw red-cheeket wean
Is our wee Jock,
Sune may he walk his lane,
Oor ain wee Jock;
A pair o' neat wee feet
He's got to rin the street,
An' ruby lips sae sweet,
Oor ain wee Jock.

His ways are gude an' mild,
Oor ain wee Jock,
He's onything but wild,
Oor ain wee Jock;
Lang may life keep him free
Frae care an' poverty,
Wherever he may be,
Oor ain wee Jock.

THINK OF ME.

Oh Lizzie, darling, think of me
When I am far from home,
Across the deep and changeful sea,
I now am forced to roam.
But though fate takes me from your side,
I'll never prove untrue,
But weary for the time when I
Will come again to you.

Oh Lizzie, dear, it gives me pain
To think that we must part,
Altho' I sail away to-day
I leave behind my heart.
Love, promise that you'll not forget
The one that loves you true,
O keep me in your memory till,
I come again to you.

Oh Lizzie, sweetheart, smile again,
And wipe away your tears,
We do not part for ever, love,
Just for a few brief years,
The time will quickly pass away,
And then from o'er the sea
I'll come again to fondly kiss
The one so dear to me.

THE GUID AULD DAYS.

I canna lea' the lan' I loe,
The hame o' Scotchmen brave,
Whaur the thistle, thyme, an' heather,
Upon the hills aye wave.
Whaur birdies sing the hale day lang,
Their sweet an' pure refrain,
I aftimes wish that I could spen'
My youthfu' days again.

I used to wander by the Clyde,
An' Cathkin's flow'ry braes,
To view the scenes o' ilka spot,
Whaur I spent sae happy days,—
Whaur lads an' lasses used to dance,
Wi' hearts sae free o' pain,
The warl's wealth I'd gie to see
These guid auld days again.

I canna lea' my mither's lan',
Whaur Bruce an' Wallace fought,
Whaur blue-bells an' wee daisies grew
Aroon' oor humble cot ;
Whaur aft I strayed wi' her I lo'e,
Sae kin', sae true, an plain,
Wi' a' my worth I'd part if I
Could see her ance again.

ISA DALGITY,

SISTER of John Dalgity, noticed in our Seventh Series, was born at Craigharr Cottage, on Persley Braes, which overlook the valley of the Don. She attended School at Whitestripes, Old Machar, and, on attaining her fourteenth year, went out into the world to add by her services to the family exchequer. Her first place was at the "farm toun" of Cothill, on Donside, and we afterwards find her at Stonywood, in the employment of the Messrs Pirie, the well-known papermakers, where hundreds of young

women are engaged as "over-haulers," "folders," and "finishers." Here she remained till two or three years ago, making the acquaintance of George Gibb, (the "G. G." of more than local fame, and since dead,) and of William Allan, both noticed by us in previous volumes. By these bards, doubtless, she was encouraged to sing, for it was at this time that she first essayed to put her thoughts into verse. Her productions occasionally appear in the columns of the *Aberdeen Free Press*, in which city she at present resides. Isa's muse delights itself among the flowers and birds, and whinny braes dear to childhood, and "the happy school days fled and gane." Her strains possess a sadness and a sweetness that at all times touch the heart.

ALANE.

O, leeze me on braes whaur the breezes are wavin',
The scent fae the boughs o' the green birken tree
An' leeze me on howes whar the burnie is lavin'
The flow'rs, as it dances adoon to the sea.

An' it's love mak's the mavis seem singin' in gladness,
An' gilds wi' sic glory the woodland an' lea—
O, cease, robin, cease yer wee sangie o' sadness,
For dool's far awa' when my Mary's wi' me.

. . . .

I wander alane at the quiet 'oor o' gloamin',
To dream o' the joys that hae vanished for aye,
An' pu' the wild flow'rs fae the sweet dewy loanin'
To strew o'er my Mary, noo cauld i' the clay.

O, sweet is yer sleep, love, whar wild flow'rs are blawin',
An' free frae a' sorrow, an' trouble, an' pain,
There aften I roam when the saft dews are fa'in,
An' dream o' the lan' whar we'll meet, love, again.

OOR COUNTRA SIDE.

They tell o' braw lan's far awa' yont the sea,
Whar I never hae been, an' I never may be;
For I carna to wan'er fae hame scenes sae dear,
Though skies may be brichter an' waters mair clear,

For my he'rt wad be wae to be back ower the tide,
To the hichts an' the howes o' oor ain countra side.

O, dear to this he'rt is the braid broomy braes,
Whar the lark far aboon sings a sang i' their praise ;
An' bonnie its woodlan's first grew i' the spring,
Whar, hid 'mang the young leaves the gay birdies sing,
An' the wee gleamin' burnies lauch clear as they glide
Awa' doon the haughs o' oor ain countra side.

Ilka footpath I ken—ilka bow'r, bush, an' steen—
There isna a spot whar oor feet haena been,
When licht-he'rtit bairnies we rambl't at will,
An' culled flow'rie treasures fae wildwood an' hill.
O time has ta'en loved things awa' on its tide,
But has left us the charms o' oor ain countra side.

O leal are oor ain folks, an' lovin' an' kin',
They are hale folks an' he'rty, contentit in min',
The cares o' the great warl', its din an' its strife,
Disturbna the quiet contentment o' life ;
They carena for grandeur, they kenna o' pride,
In the love-lichtit hames o' oor ain countra side.

But mony's the ups and the doons in a life,
An' aften, ower aften, sad pairtin's are rife,
An to pairt fae my birth-lan' it may be my lot,
But whaurever I gang it will ne'er be forgot,
For though distance its scenes an' my wanderin's divide,
My he'rt will be aye in oor ain countra side.

SCHOOL DAYS.

In fancy fond the he'rt's aft flittin'
T' happy school days past an' gane,
Careless days that kent nae sorrow,
Only fears o' tawse an' cane—
Gowden days that saw nae future,
Wi' its rough an' rugged ways,
Gladness, sunshine, lauchin', daffin',
Filled the blythe an' bricht school days.

Stupid nouns, an' verbs, an' adverbs,
An' the puzzlin' rule o' three,
Didna enter weel the wee heads
Full o' nocht but guileless glee ;
For the thochts fae books an' lessons
Wander't aft to flow'rie braes ;
Mony a care we gae the wise anes
In the blythe an' bricht school days.

Ay, we aft forgot oor lesson
Thinkin' on the summer day;
Restless for the hameward ramble,
An' the rasps an' berries blae;
Raced we then through brier an' bramble,
Scartin' arms an' tearin' claes—
Fat cared we for sic misfortunes
In the blythe an' bricht school days?

Whar are noo the merry schoolmates
That were ever side by side?
Wandering weary ower the warld,
Scattered, sunder't far an' wide,
Mixin' 'mang its busy actions,
Warstlin' in its noisy strife,
Daily learnin' harder lessons
In the sterner school o' life.

Wha hae found a bricht oasis,
Travellin' o'er life's desert ways,
Like the joyland left behind us
Wi' its blythe an' bricht school days?
Nane hae found it—nane can find it—
Yet, beyond our weary ways,
Lies a youth that's sweet—eternal—
Happier far than childhood's days.

FREEN'S O' AULD LANGSYNE.

Dear freen's o' auld langsyne, this nicht
Sad memory brings ye roon the hearth,
Wi' een lit up wi' love's warm licht,
An' brimmin' ower wi' mirth.

Your blissfu' presence fae far lan's
My een mak's dim wi' happy tears;
Ance mair I clasp yer freenly han's
Across the track o' years.

Leal freen's o' auld langsyne, I dream—
Yer weel lo'ed forms are far awa,
Alane I watch the firelight gleam
An' flicker on the wa'.

Ootside the wintry tempests sigh—
Anither year is growin' auld,
Yet tho' the changefu' years gang by
My love can ne'er grow cauld.

Leal freen's o' auld langsyne, nae mair
We'll meet aroon' the auld hearth stane,
Or roam ilk weel lo'ed spot sae fair,
When simmer smiles again.

Some day aneath a cloudless sky—
A realm o' shadeless summer shine—
We'll meet to say nae mair good-bye,
Leal freen's o' auld langsyne.

WILLIAM WILSON,

BLACKSMITH, watchmaker, &c, has for about thirty years contributed poetry and character sketches to many of the leading Scottish and English journals, and is well-known to several distinguished men of letters. He was born at Burntisland in 1830. His mother was a woman of clear judgment, with a heart brimful of tenderness and sympathy. She struggled bravely for her five children during the absence of her husband, who was a sailor. William received his limited educational training at Mount Pleasant School; and after his romping, swimming, and bird-nesting days were over, he, at the age of thirteen, "crossed the Firth in a small boat, and became an apprentice blacksmith in Edinburgh, where he remained for seven years." The next seven years of his life were spent in the heart of Buckinghamshire, where he was a leading engine-smith in the employment of the London and North Western Railway Co. During that period, surrounded by his wife and young family, he made much mental progress, and the lovely scenery that lay around proved an inspiring and enchanting paradise to the young poet's heart. It was here that he wrote his first verses. It was at Old and New Bradwell that his literary

powers first won him a wide circle of friends, and, what was reckoned a crowning feat, was the young Scotchman's diving to find the bed of the "bottomless" Ouse, over which Dick Turpin leaped with his bonnie Black Bess. The traditional charm was broken, for the river was not so deep as the harbour of Burntisland!

Mr Wilson spent another seven years of his life in the beautiful Downs of Brighton, in the employment of the London and South Coast Railway Co. At this time many of his poems appeared in the *Brighton Observer*, and this led to a friendly correspondence between our poet and John Critchley Prince, the well-known and unfortunate Manchester poet. Mr Wilson returned to Edinburgh in 1863, and for twenty-one years he has been in the employment of the N.B. Rubber Co., being at present foreman engine-smith. His few leisure hours have been spent in fighting social and political battles. Much of the success of the establishing of the short hour movement, the formation of annual trades' holidays, and the entire re-organisation of the present Trades' Council of Edinburgh are due to his efforts. Our poet was also a powerful worker in the cause of the Reform Agitation for the Burgh Franchise, and his eloquent advocacy has been heard from almost every platform in Edinburgh. With a strong and earnest desire to wield the broken links of humanity, he struck the iron when it was hot, and when he referred to what he considered the evils of the age, his voice was louder than the roar of his blazing forge.

Mr Wilson gained the first prize for a poem in the *People's Journal* competition of 1869, when there were 605 competitors. The "sparks from his anvil" that we here produce prove that our blacksmith poet writes with strength and solidity of thought, and that he possesses ease of expression, and wealth of fancy. His poems have the ring of the real metal,

and give evidence of manly independence, as witness his reply to an editor who declined the offer of a poem on the ground that it would occupy too much space :

Ye micht ha'e said, "Just send it doon,"
For, Sir, ye maun admit,
'Tis no unlikely that a loon
Like me may mak' a hit.

At this ye'll maybe sniff and snarl,
And say, "This blacksmith's manner
Bespeaks he never should unfurl
His wild poetic banner.

"Auld Scotland has her bards enew,
Her Ballantines and ithers ;
Far better men, an', unlike you,
They ne'er indulge in blethers."

Believe me, I'm "owre proud to snool,"
So, Mr what's yer name,
In case ye ca' me rhyming fool,
I'll keep my rhyme at hame.

'Twill please my wife the winter through,
'Twill please my four wee bairns ;
But why need I thus bother you,
When you it no concerns ?

Yet this in print I'd like to see,
But mind there's nae compulsion,
Just please yersel', and ye'll please me,
Yer servant, WILLIE WILSON.

Willie proved that he had some of the pluck of Burns in him, and in future his poems were not only cordially received by the said editor, but were admired wherever he was pleased to send them.

THE FALLEN SCULPTOR.

What stranger's this, sae Homer-like that sings,
An' keenly scans yon broken clouds that drift
An' float behind the king o' day, wha flings
His fiery mantle ower the wastern lift ?
Art thou, auld man, a patriotic bard ?
Gie me thy hand, if such thou truly be,

And rise frae aff the damp, cauld, dewy sward,
  There's little beild ower "Samson's Ribs" for thee.

. . . . . .

"O, bricht design! wark o' a restless will;
  Freend," quoth the sculptor, "gin I'm spared awee,
I'll raise twa statues on this noble hill
  That blythe Auld Reekie will be proud to see.
I'm but a wee auld body—broken down—
  And, though a devil wars within my brain,
There's aye a something lifts the heart abune
  The ills o' life, and whispers 'rise again.'

For he wha looks through inspiration's e'e
  Maun falter not, but work, and recollec'
The best o' men the warst o' ills maun dree—
  And whiles the warst command the maist raspec'.
I've been to Rome—Lord Murray lent me gold—
  I've dined wi' counts, *I've drunk* their sparklin' wine,
I've swam the Tiber like a Cæsar bold,
  An' reeled through Vaticans and temples fine.

What's Rome to me? I'd sooner dwell at hame,
  An' live an' linger on the humblest fare,
Than drink wi' counts, or dream o' classic fame,
  Or be the god that fills St Peter's chair.
See yonder pyramids o' glorious art—
  Cloud-piercin' monuments an' statues fine—
Where genius knelt to win the world's great heart,
  And carve a name on fame's immortal shrine.

Yet hearken, freend, if freend ye be o' mine—
  Nor frae your lips let fient a whisper slip,
Nae gold nae siller, scarce a copper coin
  Can merit rive frae Mammon's powerfu' grip.
Still, Heaven be thankit, wealth nor pomp can tether
  The mind that soars in labour's region 'dark,'
For penury and genius, linked thegither,
  Are eye enraptured ower their heavenly wark.

O Scotia's power, as symbols, here shall stand,
  That foreign foes our rights may ne'er traduce
The pride and glory of our native land—
  The warrior Wallace and the kingly Bruce.
Beneath the beild o' yonder hoary peak
  I've heard a spirit-voice sublimely ring,
As gin 'twere Wallace thundering 'Stranger, speak;
  Are ye frae England—are ye Scotland's king?'

And echo answered, through the gloamin' air—
  'Bruce be thy servant. O, for Scotland! thy

Great spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye.'
I've waled a block, sae speckless, pure, an' white,
And frae its core, by Nature's true behest,
I'll bring the brave, heroic warrior knight
Wha's valour burns in every Scottish breast.

I scorn to rest till a' my plan's complete ;
The nicht is cauld, but I will tak' nae harm ;
Fareweel, my freen'd ; though bleak is Arthur's seat,
I've *something here* will keep my heart's bluid warm.
Yet o' the man view not the gruesome part ;
For still triumphant, though the world should frown,
I'll drive the chisel through the marble's heart
For dear auld Scotland's glory and renown ! "

Fareweel, thou pillar o' great Bacchus' temple,
Wi' genius finely sculptured on thy brow ;
And whether hewn frae gentle or frae simple,
We trace the cause o' thy misfortunes now.
Thus, frae the gates o' fame and fortune hurled,
We blindly forge the bolts o' godless fate,
Or proudly ban the big, broad-shouthered world
For a' the ills that we oursels create.

ELSPIE O' BALWEARIE.

'Twas aye at the hairst-time that auld Elspie dippit
Her lang, hoary locks in the Raith waters eerie,
And whiles doon the glen in the gloamin' she slippit
To greet by the burnie that sings to Balwearie.
Her ill-getit man for his wild, poachin' ways
Was sent ower the sea ; yet she vowed she wad earn
Without sic a helpmate—the hale o' her days,
A livin' for Hughie, her only bit bairn.

She howed in the fields, and she howkit up herbs
To cure a' the sick in the Links o' Kirkcaldy ;
And on her braid back—in her " mash "-mallow pack,
Like a craw in its nest—sat her faitherless laddie.
For wow he was grim, wi' his hair like a map,
And black were his een as the slaes in the wuds ;
Yet Fife wasna blest wi' a blyther wee chap
Than Hughie, her prince, in his hamert-made duds.

The tinklers wha campit by Auchtertool road
Were struck by the sable complexion o' Hugh,
But what made them glower at the fond mither's load,
Whaur nestled wee Hughie, the Lord only knew !
The wee callant scarcely could toddle his lane
When—wearied wi' waddlin' a' day at her side—

She threw doon her wallet whaur skaith there was nane (?)
And Hugh mounted guard to protect it wi' pride.

'Twas doon i' the glen by the auld blasted tree,
Whause branch, hingin' low, maistly bridged ower the burn;
'Twas there whaur the howlet was jealous to see
The hawk and the hoodiecraw hameward return;
And the tap o' the Tower, in its rugged decay,
Look'd down on the glen, like an ominous cairn;
And up frae the burn to the whins on the brae
Puir Elspie, distracted, ran seekin' her bairn!

"Hoy, Hughie!" she cried a' the weary nicht lang,
Yet nane but hersel' did the puir body blame;
And aye as the wail o' her soul deeper rang,
The howlets, in mockery, re-echoed his name.
In mercy the branch o' the sauch seemed to dip
Its sprig-fingers doon to the sair tatter'd pack;
But naething forbye could they haud in their grip,
Sae on rushed the burn in its eerisome track.

The mither gaed mooping the lave o' her days
In search o' her laddie by ilk burnie side;
But wild Border tinklers, to wild Border braes,
Had stown him awa' twenty summers to bide.
He roamed wi' his tribe, like a prince brave and bauld,
Yet, spite o' his nature, sae fearless and wild,
When auld dying Mable his origin tauld,
The stout-hearted Border King wept like a child.

He flew, as an eagle wad flee, to the Raith,
And through the lane wuds to Balwearie he ran,
Whaur puir aged Elspie sat hauding her braith,
To see at her side sic a big buirdly man.
He grippit her hand, and he kissed her cauld broo,
And faltered, "For me, gin her broken heart warms,
Oh, mither!" "Oh, God. in His mercy—my Hugh!"
She sigh'd, and she died in her "lost" laddie's arms.

THE FISHERMAN OF CASTLEFOIL.

His name was Andrew, and in all the North,
A blither lad ne'er claimed a poet's song;
His deeds of daring on the billowy Forth,
His generous heart, his noble Christian worth,
Gave him the victory over many a wrong.

And if his soul no flame of genius caught,
He spread abroad amongst his fellow-kind
The teachings which humanity had taught;

And in the depths of thought he plunged and sought
The richest jewels of the human mind.

And when, in Castlefoil, the sea-king stood
In all the majesty of manly pride,
He carried out in practice all the good,
Great maxims of the wise, though with the rude,
Morn, noon, and night, he battled side by side.

His little bark, which industry had given,
Braved many a tempest in the boisterous bay;
Nor yielded seaward to be tossed and driven—
As if a silver cord hung down from heaven,
To guide her safely on her perilous way.

He sought deliverance from every lure
On mammon and the world's unstable sands;
And though he lived and laboured all obscure,
He would be honest though he should be poor,
And left the issue in his Maker's hands.

Both priest and father, yea a lamb of peace
Within the circle of his home was he:
Yet in the outer world, from toil's release,
He like a lion fought that gold should cease
To be the measure of morality.

Still perfect calms the mariner brave knew not,
Save when the prattle of his children ceased,
And night's dark mantle wrapped his lowly cot,
Then love and lore, to crown his happy lot,
Within his bosom held a glorious feast.

And, there, if one small spark of heavenly fire
These genial guests had kindled into flame,
With God's high will, and his own warm desire,
He might have soared above th' indignant ire
Of all the proud who scorn a humble name.

But ah, for many a long and darksome day,
A lonely wife and children looked in vain,
And wept for him who, sailing far away—
Beyond the billows of the boisterous bay—
To them would surely soon return again.

The angry Forth poured out a mournful song;
That lowly prince, who loved his perilous toil,
Shall strive no more to make the feeble strong;
Yet many a mariner will remember long
The good, wise fisherman of Castlefoil.

THE BARD OF AVON.

No city bells rang through the April morn,
For all was mute around old England's throne;
Nor knew the world a mighty bard was born
To strike the harp—three hundred years agone;
A sprightly boy whose leaping heart of joy
So freely drank the dews of native grandeur;
A poet poor, who rose from scenes obscure
To crown Britannia with immortal splendour.

Fair Wisdom smoothed his brow of marble whiteness,
And Nature probed his soul of living fire,
And in the glory of her angel brightness
She blessed the youth, and tuned his bosom lyre.
And thus arrayed, the Bard of Avon strayed
Far from the echoes of his "early thunder,"
To fight for bread, where life with death is wed,
A lonely stranger in a world of wonder.

A solemn figure in a wondrous maze,
Unmantled never by the human hand—
A friendless boy inspired to nobly raise
The ideal standard of his native land.
Hail to the King! the peerless "man of men,"
The glowing bard of bards, so heavenly human,
The boon companion of his dear friend Ben,
When health they pledged to many a lovely woman.

With spirits, angels, and with humankind—
By some propulsion of Divinity—
His brilliant soul, his deep mysterious mind
Had strong, impassioned, strange affinity!
Nor prized he then the applause of living men,
But strung the lyre to ring through time's expansion,
And sought at last, when thunder storms were past,
His childhood's home—his hallowed, lowly mansion.

And all philosophy can now impress,
Grave prose, majestic verse, or genial rhyme—
"He lived, and sang, and died in lowliness,
Amid the glory of his dreams sublime!"
His memory dear ye kindred bards revere,
And still adore the slumbering sage of sages,
The unconscious flower that shed from Nature's bower
Its fragrance sweet, perfuming future ages.
An April shower, a drop of heavenly dew,
That gently fell where flows the Avon river;
A star terrestrial, brightly beaming through
Three hundred years, that yet shall burn for ever!

JESSIE ANN ANDERSON,

THE eldest of a family of eleven, was born at Ellon, Aberdeenshire, in 1861. While only in her second year, her parents removed to the "Granite City," in order that the father, a mason to trade, might find steady employment. Before her tenth year, and without attending school, she could read "Paradise Lost," "M'Culloch's Course of Reading," and a "History of Rome"—all of which had been her mother's school books. She tells us that for many an hour, with the assistance of her mother, she would pour over these well-worn volumes. Her mind, too, had been stored, and her imagination fired with old stories and ballads. About this time arrangements were made to send her to school, but an accident so injured her spine that, before she was eleven years of age, her lower limbs were paralysed, and to this day she has been unable to walk. Although thus afflicted, she was still anxious to improve her mind, and having a retentive memory, she soon mastered sufficient grammar and composition to express herself, both in speaking and writing, with astonishing correctness. It was not, however, until her seventeenth year that her desire to put her thoughts into verse took possession of her soul. During the next two years she wrote many poetical pieces, of which she says "I had the good sense to burn without showing to any one." In her twentieth year she had the pleasure of seeing one of her poems in the pages of the "Christian Cabinet." Concerning this, her maiden effort, she thus writes: "When I received the magazine containing my verses, I thought I had done a clever thing indeed, and expected my people to endorse that opinion. Alas for my innocent vanity! After reading the verses, my

mother suspiciously asked if they were quite original, because she had never heard that I wrote, and if I had taken my ideas from anyone I would get into trouble. Until that moment I had scribbled away with no definite purpose, but my mother's opposition only roused within me a determination to do better."

Miss Anderson wrote for some years after this under the *nom-de-plume* "Patience," until, having gained a one pound prize in the *People's Journal* Christmas competition (1883), she again wrote under her own name. Since then she has contributed with much acceptance to the *People's Friend* and *People's Journal*. Most of her pieces had been composed in the sitting-room, amid the bustle and conversation of a large family. This was no doubt trying to such an one as our poetess. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and so she tells us: "I soon discovered a plan by which I gained an hour or two of quiet. When all have retired to rest, I sometimes sit up in bed, and set to work in the darkness with pencil and paper, and although I often cross and re-cross my lines in bewildering entanglement, it is better than the interruptions that too often put my Muse to flight." She writes with a refreshing boldness and freedom, and expresses her thoughts in pure and graceful language. The specimens of her poetic flights submitted for our perusal show the result of extensive reading, and have in them the ring of true poetry.

THE GREEK PATRIOT.

A Greek stood by the Spartan graves,
'Mid rocks the sea in worship laves
As it breaks upon the shore,*
And on them lay day's lingering rays,
Like the glory of departed days
That Greece would see no more.

* Thermopylæ.

He gazed with kindling eyes around,
To him each sod was holy ground ;
'Twas there the Spartans fell,
'Twas there those glorious heroes stood,
Those rocks were purpled with their blood,
And there their spirits dwell.

And, as he gazed, he proudly cried,
" For thee, O Greece, these rocks were dyed
With thy son's noblest gore ! "
Then mournful grew his mein and voice—
He cried, " Wherefore should I rejoice ?
My country is no more.

Ye spirits of heroic dead !
In vain for Greece your blood was shed,
Your countrymen are slaves ;
Rather than dwell with craven men,
Like fox I've fled to mountain den,
Or dwell in sea-washed caves.

Unhappy Greece ! I've wept for thee,
And fought and prayed to make thee free,
But all, alas ! in vain !
The scalding tears unbidden start
With thoughts of what thou wert and art,
And what thou mayest remain.

Greece ! whence the change ? not from thy soil,
Scarce does it need its children's toil—
Still radiant skies are thine ;
Thou hast thine ancient wealth of song ;
Still to thy glorious fields belong
The olive and the vine.

Luxurious 'mid relentless foes
Thy soulless sons bent to their woes,
Then came the dismal change ;
Thy temples fell, now through them roam
The winds, there owls have made their home,
And wolves and jackals range.

Thy Parthenon is overthrown,
Its colonades stand weird and lone,
With moss of ages hoary ;
Would ruin were in these alone,
In fretted roof and carven stone ;
But, Greece, thy ancient glory,

What is it now ? a jest to earth,
The ashes of a fireless hearth,
A mockery and a shame !

Ah, gladly would I drain my veins
If blood might wash away the stains
That lie upon my name.

First 'mid the nations thou hast stood,
Thy freedom bought with dearest blood,
Thy children's sacrifice ;
But night fell on the glorious day,
The shadow of the tyrant's sway
Fell on all save thy skies.

Honour and freedom now have fled
Thy fettered, thrall-held soul, and dead
Thy grandeur and thy fame.
Oh, Greece, hast thy degenerate race
No son to fill his father's place,
That thou endur'st thy shame ?

Oh, Sparta, for thy heroes' swords !
Demosthenes ! oh for thy words
To rouse those recreant slaves !
To bear their fathers' stainless shields,
For Greece, on glorious battlefields,
And win them patriots' graves ! "

He paused, and on his glittering blade
A sacred, solemn vow he made
To consecrate his life
To free the Moslem-trodden land ;
Then grasped the steel firm in his hand,
And turned him to the strife.

Amid those graves once more he stood,
But in a proud, exulting mood,
He had redeemed his vow ;
The blow was struck, and Greece was free—
Free as the proud, unfettered sea,
And laurel crowned his brow.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON.

There was revelry loud in the Philistine's hall,
For the Hebrew, a captive, stood bound 'fore them all ;
There were maids in their beauty, and men in their strength,
Whom the land had sent up from her breadth and her length
To look on the man who had dealt desolation,
Whose deeds had been writ in the blood of the nation ;
They crowded the roof, and they thronged in the court,
To exult while their captive, proud Samson, made sport.

They praised their god Dagon, extolling his name,
Deeming *he* in his strength had brought low that proud frame;
And there stood their victim, sad, sightless, and bound,
Proudly facing his foes, like a monarch uncrowned.
His soul well might burn with a fierce, quenchless hate,
Betrayed by a woman! inglorious fate!
If stricken in battle unmoved he'd have died,
But now bitter shame was concealed beneath pride.

Would he languish dishonoured, unable to wield
A sword 'gainst his foe, and meet death on the field?
He thought of his country, oppressed by her foes,
Then of vengeance, swift vengeance, redeeming her woes—
Her woes, and his own—and his blood swiftly flowed,
A word to his guide, and a heart-cry to God,
Then, grasping the pillars, he bowed in his might—
A wild crash of ruin, and day grew as night.

Dust darkened the sun, and wild shrieks of despair
Arose from the chaos and took to the air,
That a moment before rung with shouting and song,
While Philistia rejoiced o'er the triumph of wrong.
Now the flower of the nation, her strength and her pride,
Age, manhood, and childhood, friend, lover, and bride,
Were heaped 'mong the ruins, were lost in the strife,
And the victor was nobler in death than in life.

THE LOST EARTH.

Pathless the desert, dark the shades, and wild,
  Wherein the lost Earth wandered far from God;
With feeble feet, bent head, and robes defiled,
  And faint beneath the pressure of sin's load,
For ages, like a travel-wearied child,
  Uncheered she trod a barren, trackless road;
And oft her children passed beyond her sight,
  Beyond the shades more dread than rayless night.

Not mighty forests, in their whisperings,
  Could tell her aught of how her children slept,
In vain to ocean's roar or murmurings
  Her aching heart anticipating leapt;
And when great winds, like unseen, rushing wings,
  In mystic grandeur round her pathway swept,
She quivered to her soul, her sad brow paled,
  For like lost souls they shrieked, and moaned, and wailed.

No voice replied unto her anguished moan;
  She gazed around, no form nor shade drew near,
She wildly groped, but no hand touched her own,
  The awful silence smote her soul with fear.

Oft in the watches of the night alone
She hushed her sobs, and breathless bent to hear
If then a Voice would speak although in wrath,
And rend the mysteries deepening round her path.

Though moonbeams fell from crystalline, azure heaven,
Like silver pathways, to be trod by feet
Of spirit-messengers, no sign was given,
Nor when the blushing day woke pure and sweet,
Nor when storm-clouds athwart the sky were driven,
Nor yet when radiant hours swooned 'neath the heat.
In vain she waited for one sign to come,
And Nature's wondrous voices here were dumb.

He came, as one of Earth's own children bent
With grief, but ah! 'twas more than mortal woe;
And by His hand death's dread, dark shades were rent,
Till light fell on enraptured eyes below,—
"Far hast thou strayed, thy talents are misspent,"
He said, "but God's sweet mercy stoopeth low,
Tread thou the path my bleeding feet have trod,
And I will lead thee to thy Father, God."

THE BARD OF PASSION.

"With him alone may rest the pain,
If such there be; with you, the moral of the strain."
—*Childe Harold.*

Ah, Bard of Passion, how mine eyes devoured
That long, bright summer day thy glorious page!
I marvelled not that meaner natures cowered
Beneath thy lofty scorn and noble rage.
Entranced I traced "Childe Harold's pilgrimage,"
And as each pregnant line heart-hunger fed
My soul forgot the puny, earth-born cage;
With every pulse in harmony I read
Till dark-robed night came down to tell that day was dead.

I slept, then woke; but would that yet I slept;
Why woke I but to see thee fallen low?
I saw thy blighted fame, and could have wept
O'er its dark stains; but ah, in vain the flow
Of tears to cleanse thy page; ah, bitter woe,
When through such clouds I saw thy glory shine,
Better the most unsoftened, lurid glow
Of Cain or Manfred that one ribald line,
I prayed Heaven keep me stainless from such stains as thine.

But more I read, then knew thou didst but turn
At bay against the false hounds of mankind;

Hypocrisy, not virtue, thou didst spurn.
Better to look on truth than to be blind—
Who would not seek to know the hidden mind !
What fool would trust the world's seeming worth !
There many a cause for laughter thou didst find,
But ah, 'twas the cynics bitter mirth,
Lip-laughter with soul-tears for petty shows of earth.

Many a baseless slander thou hast borne,
And many a bitter, soul-deep, cruel wrong ;
What though thou bor'st thyself with haughty scorn ?
Thine anguish spoke in deathless, burning song,
For hearts will feel through armour e'er so strong.
Whate'er thy faults were, my tongue shall not swell
The clamour of the Pharisaic throng
That doom thy soul in Hades' shades to dwell,
As if to dust God gives the keys of Death and Hell.

Byron ! where I now stand, there thou hast stood,
Before life mystery and man's impotence,
Lone on life's waste, and yet wast unsubdued,
So I must ever speak in thy defence,
Although I feel through every quickened sense
Thy sun has lit my soul to quench a fire
That burned until it felt thy light intense
Unstrung and voiceless lies my wreathless lyre,
To strike its feeble chords I scarce dare now aspire.

ROBERT ANDREW MACFIE,

DREGHORN CASTLE, Midlothian, was born at Leith, in 1811. On both his father's and his mother's side he was in his youth connected with relatives who, without publishing, enjoyed the "elegant luxury of rhyming." His father was the personal friend of Hogg, his own connection Galt, and, consequently, other literary personages. While yet at his Latin, Master Robert anonymously contributed the following simple epigrams to a college periodical apropos of observations on corporal punish-

ment enunciated to his class and to the outside public by Professor Pillans—

> "The lash should not be used," good Pillans cries,
> "What force can't do is done by kinder art."
> Tis plain that such a plan's by no means wise,
> Why so? for lashing makes a young man *smart*.

He had the gratification of overhearing the warm approval of this witticism expressed, in ignorance of its origin, by a class-fellow—the late gifted poet, George M'Crie, son of the first historian of the name. Again—

> "Miss F——," they say, "makes a great noise,
> And kills the youths around her."
> But why should that astonish us,
> When she's a thousand pound-er?

These epigrams must have been written when he was about fourteen years of age, so early did youths go to college in those days.

Mr Macfie was long engaged in commercial pursuits, and for some time sat in Parliament, having yielded to requisitions to represent his native town—1868-1874. He has published in his own name several practical and interesting pamphlets on missions, hymns, brotherhood, the colonies, &c., and two bulky volumes of compilations entitled "Copyright and Patents," chiefly for distribution. Lately he issued, anonymously, the greater part of his poetical productions under the title of "Verities in Verses" (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace), "believing that they might in some quarters serve a good purpose as religious tracts."

Our poet is a thorough Scot, and retains a good hold of the Doric as spoken in the Lothians and Renfrewshire three score years ago, and is in accord with some of the national traditions, being, as times go, tolerably independent in his views of things political, and of party bonds of relationship. He

adheres to Liberal principles, but now takes very little part in public movements. He lives on his estate of Dreghorn, in a romantic and beautiful seventeenth century mansion, situated in the parish of Colinton, at the northern base of the Pentlands. The estate, whence John Maclaurin (1734-96) assumed the title of Lord Dreghorn on his elevation to the bench, belonged in 1671 to Sir William Murray, Master of Works to Charles II., and in 1720 to the Homes, whose tutor, David Mallet (or Malloch), the poet, here wrote the famous ballad of "William and Margaret." Afterwards it passed to the Trotters, and is now, as already stated, owned by the subject of our sketch. In the midst of such inspiring associations, surrounded with the beauties of Nature, Mr Macfie has successfully cultivated his poetic gift. We learn, however, that he resolutely disclaims all pretension to be a poet, except in the literal signification of the word, which is rendered in the old Scotch as *makker*—a signification which he contends exhibits a perfectly fair and self-commendatory view of what "verse-spinning" may fairly be considered. His poems, however, evince a heart imbued with the gentle influence of love and affection for all classes, earnest, large-hearted, and broad human sympathies. His prose writings, as well as his serious and reflective verses, show an elevation and purity of sentiment. He writes in no gloomy, desponding style. In his gravest mood a hopeful "glint" of true, deep-toned piety is ever present.

JOHNNIE'S FAREWELL.

"Sweet Annie, I maun gaun awa',
Bid Scotia a lang, lang adieu,
For, waes me, necessity's law
Will tear me frae hame and frae you.

Ambition plays herein nae pairt;
I courtna vain riches or fame;

My joys hae their root in the heart,
And branch for a new nestling hame.

A man, to be canty and blithe,
Maun hae a trig wifie for mate ;
I'll labour wi' ploughshare and scythe,
But daurna ask dawtie to wait.

It wadna be fair to my dear,
Though I lo'e her far mair than mysel',
'Fore I leave the auld kintra to speer
If she's willing to mak' and to mell.

It wadna be kind to ye, lass,
Weel kenning I maynae succeed ;
When toddlers come, ane should hae brass
The wee things to busk up and feed.

I'll work day and nicht very hard
To plenish a hoose big and bein,
Then learn if ye're nae way debarred
From ca'ing me mair than chief frien'.

I'll gang to fair lands far awa',
Whaur loyalty biles to the Queen,
In language the same, laws and a',
Though ocean's lang brig lies atween.

Our kintra's folk there dinna feel
As if they were pairted or frem ;
By thrift they gain pocks o' guid meal ;
What nation's land-robe has sic hem ?"

Her looks—and he reads them—imply
"A sensible lass, could I swither,
On the sune side gif asked, to say 'Aye ;
We'll spiel the brae baith thegither.

Our King had nae place for his heid ;
A but and a ben saired my mither ;
Speed the ploo, and braw Johnnie God speed,' "
And she kissed him eenoo as her brither.

A COMPARISON.

Threads without number, spun with earnest care,
Unite to form a fabric rich and rare ;
The several parts harmoniously combine,
And take their places in its grand design.

The globe's four quarters, flocks of many lands,
Even Chinese and Italian worms, the hands
That ply the distaff, or the spindle wield,
With one consent their best productions yield.

These utmost skill and beauteous nature vie
To render bright with every splendid dye,
While highest art her triumph to achieve
A gorgeous tapestry proceeds to weave.

Then in due order at the destined loom
Those various parts in unison assume
The form and pattern of one work entire,
Whose texture, fitness, beauty, kings admire.

And as of old, choice stones aforehand cut
With timber suited for the place where put,
Rose noiseless in the rapt beholders' view
A stately Temple, every line most true :

So from all lands and every nation, sought
With loving heed, are the materials brought
And fitted, which, though weak and rude and wrought
With little observation, little sound,
Become a beauteous church, with glory crowned,
The perfect work of God, where His delights abound.

A SONG OF THE NIGHT.

Murky night awes the stout boor,
Crossing wild morass and moor,
Whom no ray from cot or star
Cheers and beckons from afar.

If the vivid lightning dart,
Deeper quails that manly heart ;
While concurrent thunder peals,
Weight of gloom the more he feels.

Now rude rains in deluge pour,
Soon defiant torrents roar ;
Danger haunts the trackless way ;
Longs he then for break of day.

Sullen, Christian ! lowers *thy* sky ;
Earth is adverse, danger nigh ;
What a time of horror this—
Cold and dismal loneliness.

Till the tempest fierce abate,
Ours to pray and watch and wait ;
Promised dawn is surely near ;
Quickly will the Lord appear.

Fearless to the faith-won mark
Onward toil we in the dark ;
Lone one ! hark, a brother's song ;
Lo ! around thee angels throng !

A SOLILOQUY.

"How many churches in our town ?" they ask,
"To count the steeples were no easy task."
If churches in Paul's sense be understood,
There is but one, the Christian brotherhood.

If edifices many were required
For *numbers* who sweet fellowship desired—
Not diff'rences that segregate and blight—
Such multitude were much, battalioned, might.

By manifold denominations rent
To strips of "ribbon" or thin filament,
The main-sheet of "The Church" one sadly sees,
No more propulsive, flapping in the breeze.

The church, of such a place, we may compare
To the sail complement a bark should bear,
Charged by the sovereign to procure release
Of captives, or proclaim to rebels peace.

Heaven's favouring wind should swell the whole array
While crew and officers one aim display.
Oh ! every ship of the commissioned fleet
Bearing his flag, expanded every sheet,

Should steer and strive on, under one control,
As a component of the loyal whole—
A scene for angels' joy ; alas ! our day
Presents it not for pencil to portray.

If tempest or defection disunite,
Still the true blue, with Admiral in sight,
Observe, obey, his signal in the dark,
Who, task concluded, will approval mark.

Let every city, congregation, saint,
The bold and buoyant, with the weak and faint,
Promote by every means the fond desire
Of Him who came on earth to train by fire.

"The kingdom of the heavens" (for which we hope)
"Its gate of entrance will to no one ope
Except his form of righteousness exceed
That of the Scribes and Pharisees," we read.

Jealous, like them, for pattern orthodoxy,
We likewise practice righteousness by proxy;
Paying our guinea test of love and pities,
We lay the bliss of work on Grand Committees,

Which in their turn some humbler help engage
Of subs, with sin and woe to battle wage;
'Barred sympathy's perennial gushing fount,
All pine on driblets drawn from bank account.

We blame not, nor prescribe; and yet how clear
That fashion and possessions interfere
With time, and thought, devotion to concerns,
Which *ton* (like cock the diamond) blind asperns!

Weighty considerations intervene
To lessen care for temporal and seen;
But traitor currents are so smooth and strong,
Men leave the helm, and heedless drift along.

They drift apart—alas! to drift astray;
A movement fell no earthly power can stay,
If caught in meshes of a dread ice-floe,
Whose drear expanse the dead and wreckage strow.

LIZZIE D. ANDERSON

WAS born at the farm of Cairnrobin, about five miles south from Aberdeen. Her father was then tenant of that farm, but the family left it, when the subject of our sketch was an infant, for the farm of Ord, in the parish of New Machar, which place they left at the end of their lease. Bogfen of Thainstone, Kintore, was their next home, and here the subject of our sketch still resides with her brother, who succeeded to the farm on the death

of their parents. Miss Anderson, from her earliest recollection, was very fond of poetry. When a mere girl she was wont to write short pieces, but never thought of putting her thoughts before the eyes of the public until she grew up to womanhood. The first production she sent to the *Aberdeen Free Press* received a cordial welcome, and for several years she was a regular contributor to that and other newspapers. Of late, owing to ill-health, she has not written much. She delights to depict the scenes and incidents of her early days. These are pictures true to life, drawn with tender pathos and delicacy of expression, and presenting an ideal of life elevated alike above the trivial and the artificial.

THERE'S MAIR THINGS CAW'D DOUN THAN THE BRIG O'ER THE TAY.

In the neuk o' oor yard there stood a lang seat
That partly wis shelter'd fae win' an' fae weet,
It's feet wi' the yird war strongly conneckit,
But we never thocht o' tryin' to check it;
The moss grew in clumpies upon its auld leaf,
But a'thing aboot it seem't wonderfu' knief.

The trees spread their branches oot o'er its auld heid,
Just as if they ken'd fae them shelter 't'wad need;
The leaves o' the green bay cam' roun' ilka side,
The sweet periwinkle amang them did hide,
An' noo here an' there a wee flowrie wad peep,
Like mem'ries that ne'er in the bosom will sleep.

O, weel div I min' when a child I wad rin
Upon my bit hosies for fear o' a din,
Abeen on the auld seat, an' haud b' the back,
In case I micht maybe gae aff o' my track;
These days, they're awa', but I canna forget,
The innocent pleasure comes aye back wi' it.

But here I maun tell ye, this seat, like some fowk,
That's noo by the crood ca'd "feel," "gype," an' "gowk,"
Had seen better days, wi' a reef o'er its heid,
Fan we sat on't thegither oor lessons to read;
Fowk, tired an' sair wearied wi' labour's turmoil,
Lay doon on its bosom to rest them awhile.

The heids are nae sair noo that ance ken't its worth
Afore it wis carriet awa' to the furth,
Whaur aft on t' aul' close freens hae crackit thegither
'Bout corn, an' cattle, the times, an' the weather ;
But fouk maun hae fashions an' furniture tee,
Sae it's wormeat'n timmer nae langer wad dee.

Weel, ye min' on the nicht o' the terrible win'
The brig o'er the Tay gaed afor't like a string,
An' a'thing was shakin' an' makin' a din
Aneuch to gar sinners repent o' their sin ;
Alas, my auld freen shared the very same fate
As that piece o' grandeur that ance steed in state.

Ye see, bein' a wee indisposed at the time,
'Twas days ere I ken'd o' this sad loss o' mine,
But fan I was able I crawl'd oot to see
My auld fav'rite seat at the fit o' the tree,
An' there, wi' its feet lookin' up to the meen,
The back o' it yirded doun into the green.

Ye've aft heard o' lovers gaun clean oot o' reel,
An' makin' themsel's even waur than a feel,
Wi' me it was diff'rent, I thocht it a blessin'
That I wisna there the green yird a-kissin',
For aff'n I sat out aboot the same time,
An' micht hae been dash'd like the fouk on the line.

Ye'll think it some queer to compare the auld thing
Wi' the braw brig o' Tay o'er the water that hung,
But ye ken there's a Providence ruleth o'er a',
The cottage to Him is as dear as the ha',
Sae He, in His wisdom, has seen it was meet
That they baith thegither should lie at His feet.

Fate hisna ta'en a', for we're left wi' the frame,
Sae we'll e'en raise again the ance weel honoured name,
An' stedfast an' ready oorsel's we should be
On the coach, or the train, or the land, or the sea,
He's tauld us He's comin', and that's just eneuch,
" Be ready's " the word, an' look aye to yer pleuch.

AUTUMN.

The Autumn winds are come again,
And raving round my home ;
All Nature tells a mournful tale
That fills the heart with gloom.

It tells me now that I no more
Can wander in the fields,

When Sol, descending o'er yon hills,
His light no longer yields.

Ah, yes away they've gone again,
Those spring and summer hours,
And all the zephyr winds that sighed
At eve among the flowers.

The sweet wee daisy—favourite flower—
To Scottish heart so dear,
The last to leave the soil we love,
The first in Spring to cheer.

It too must fall a helpless prey
To time's destroying blast;
Oh, safely keep our loved ones, earth,
Until the storms be past.

And ye who bask beneath the light
Of Fancy's changing smile,
Come, leave her fair enchanting groves
To walk with me a while.

Let Nature's desolating voice
Speak solemnly to you,
For weak and worthless passions oft
Change hearts that once were true.

'Tis sad to see the ruthless blast
Sweep down the fairest flower,
But sadder still to view the wreck
Of many a mispent hour.

While yet there's space consider well,
And meditate upon
The Spring and Summer of your life,
For soon they will be gone.

The blast will come, and you must yield,
Whate'er thy fruit may be,
The Autumn soon will come to shake
The leaves from off thy tree.

Oh, hear the voice of Wisdom now,
Respond unto her call,
And learn a lesson from the leaves
As they around thee fall.

THE HOME OF MY CHILDHOOD.

Dear old home, around thy memory
Twines a wreath of evergreen,
And within its leafy circle
Are the friends that once hath been.

Stranger voices sound within thee,
And no more the apple tree,
With its branches round each window
Looking in familiarly.

Still I think I see the sunbeams,
Golden-like, upon its leaves,
And the ripe and red-cheek'd apples
Gather'd in with golden sheaves ;

And the little garden patches
Set apart for each to till—
Flow'r-bespangl'd spots of childhood,
Fragrant to my memory still ;

And the place I caught the minnows,
Where the cattle used to drink,
Or to venture for a flow'ret
Growing on the water's brink ;

And the time my childish fancies
Chang'd for thoughts of deeper hue,
And a strange and anxious longing
Seem'd my spirit to imbue.

Then I'd wander o'er the meadow
Till I reach'd the burnie's side,
Then in silent contemplation
Watch its gentle waters glide ;

Or the favourite path that wended
Through the woods to where the flow'rs
And the ivy twin'd together
In their sweet and fragrant bow'rs.

O, 'twas sweet to rest among them,
Or to stray at fancy's will
Homeward by the winding footpath,
And the bridge across the rill.

Changing scenes may please a moment,
Fortune may her smile bestow,

Still in fancy oft I'll wander
Where these flow'rets used to grow,

Back to where I spent my childhood,
In the dear, old cherish'd home ;
Though the family ring be broken,
Memory holds us still as one.

THE DYING GIRL AND THE FLOWERS.

O, yes, you tell me lovingly
About the beauteous flow'rs,
A' blooming now so beautiful
Throughout the spring-tide hours.

But I must tell you, sister dear,
I'm passing fast away
To changeless spring in yonder land,
And everlasting day.

And I have just been wondering
About my future home,
And how delightful it would be
'Mong flow'rs for aye to roam ;

For I have priz'd them much on earth—
Like friends to me they've been ;
But how can pencil paint a land
That eye hath never seen ?

There may be trees, there may be flowers,
And birds with golden plume ;
But such, I think, are metaphors
To gild the lonely tomb ;

For as I mus'd upon these things,
The truth came home to me,
The ransomed ones in glory
Bloom on continu'ly.

The heavenly flowers we talk about
Once grac'd an earthly stem ;
They were the ones who dearly lov'd
The "Rose of Sharon's" name.

And now beneath unchanging skies
They bloom for ever more ;
No with'ring blast can ever sweep
O'er their immortal shore.

No more they'll come like flow'rs in spring
To cheer us on our way ;
But some have left a perfume here
That ne'er will pass away.

So farewell, flow'rs of earthly growth ;
I'm fading just like you ;
The next rude blast will bear my soul
Away from mortal view.

And, sister dear, when I am gone
Talk not with tears and sighs ;
But sing another flow'r of earth
Is blooming in the skies.

THOMAS THOMSON

WAS born at Loanhead, Midlothian, in 1800, and received his education at Lasswade Parish School. After a brief term of attendance there, he was bound apprentice to a house painter at Lasswade, and, when duly qualified, he settled as a tradesman in that line in the neighbouring town of Dalkeith. There he spent a long lifetime in conducting a prosperous business. Mr Thomson had tastes beyond mere house decoration, and much of his leisure time was devoted to art painting and poetry. He sketched in oil both landscapes and portraits, and several of the former, consisting of views of Dalkeith and places in the neighbourhood, were engraved by Lizars, of Edinburgh. Among the portraits was the grandfather of Dr Samuel Smiles, who was, like himself, a native of Loanhead. Having obtained an introduction to the late Duke of Sussex, His Royal Highness appointed him his painter, an honour which he naturally valued highly. As a poet, his powers were well known and recog-

nised throughout the district in which his life was spent. His effusions generally took the form of religious musings and hymns. For a long period he wrote and published a hymn for the young every successive New Year, and had it widely circulated and sung in the Sabbath schools of the district. He also wrote a number of songs in Scotch, commemorative of local events. His principal poem is in blank verse, and entitled "The Tomb of Priesthill." It commemorates the martydom of John Brown, and was published by Messrs Oliphant & Sons, Edinburgh, in 1843. It is illustrated with a well-executed engraving, from a drawing by the author, of the tomb over the martyr's remains, and of the surrounding scenery of the spot where the man of God met his fate.

Mr Thomson died in 1879. His oldest son, David Thomson, was well known both in Edinburgh and Glasgow for his ardent devotion to the cause of total abstinence, and for his harmless and amusing foibles. The family is now extinct. We quote the introductory portion and an extract from "The Tomb of Priesthill," to convey to the reader some idea of the style of Mr Thomson's poetry, which was almost wholly of an exalted and deeply pious and devotional character.

Such orisons he poured, then took his way
Across the flowery bent; a crystal stream
Which rippled down the glen he stepp'd, and then
Ascending gentle slope, thus silent mused:—
"O brook, I love thy song; methought long since
Thy limpid wave I would not now have seen;
And now, methinks, that hour is on the wing,
When there, loved lonely rill, unknown in song,
May yet be sung the Kedron of Priesthill."
'Twas well he thus did muse, that thus he sung
Of mercy and of judgment, for ere long
The hour he neither feared nor hoped was come!
What time he called his household from repose,
And round the family altar with them knelt,
Another with the dawn did call to arms

His harnessed helmed troops. Accoutred all
As had the enemy been a foreign foe,
They took the hills in quest of godly Brown.
Meanwhile he now had reached the destined spot,
From bending o'er the turf in arduous toil,
Had made a pause, and on his mattock leaned,
When, lo! terrific sight did meet his eye:
On Glenbuck, gleaming 'neath first summer's rays
He saw the gleam of swords, and warlike steeds,
And white-plumed leader with his armed troops.

. . . . .

Thrice fifty years are flown since that sad scene
Was witnessed 'mong these hills; yet here's fulfill'd
What Judah's Bard foretold of righteous men,
That their memorial should endless prove.
Yes! shepherds now tell of the shepherd then,
The good, the great Priesthill: they fondly lead
The stranger to his tomb, and weeping say:—
"Here rests the honoured martyr, godly Brown!"

THE TOMB OF PRIESTHILL.

While thousand eyes gaze on the fluted towers
Which stud the busy street,—and yonder dome
Invites the stranger to its gorgeous hall
Where are the marble and the painted busts,
Those remembrances of the famous dead,
I wander 'mong the hills and sketch the tomb
Of him who 'neath it lies,—a martyr'd saint;
Not on the roll of heraldry his name,
Nor classified with bards and men of note;
Yet is it graven on the patriot's breast,
And deeper graven on the pious heart,—
Yea, blazon'd on the scutcheonry of heaven!
Far from the haunts of men, he lived with God,
And while on earth held converse with the skies.
To tell his worth the pious rear'd his tomb,
His lonely tomb: God wrote the epitaph:—
"Here Antipas, my faithful martyr, rests.

THE MARTYR'S PRAYER.

Calm as the morn
So tranquil was his soul. He musing stood,
And viewed the grandeur of the rural scene,
Then in adoring gratitude exclaim'd:—
"These heavens Thy glory do show forth; this earth
Is full of praise, and I will Thee extol!
Almighty Father, Thine, formed for Thy praise,
I praise Thee, Fount of Life, of Light, and Love!

Whose is the day and night, and sun and moon,
The starry host, and garniture of heaven,
The lakes, the rivers, and the crystal streams.
These green hills round my home, these barren wilds,
Yon gorgeous clouds which kiss the orient wave,
These flocks which browse, these birds which sweetly sing,
All speak Thy praise, Thy power, Thy beauty, love;
Thou who mad'st all, should'st homage have from all.
And, O my God! protector, comforter,
The source of all my hope and all my joy,
Thou, who in yonder valley, with a cloud
Did'st shelter Peden from the men of blood,
O throw the shield of Thine omnipotence
Around me now, while I direct my course
To yonder lonely spot. Lord, me protect,
In life or death devoted to be Thine!"

WILLIAM OLIVER,

OF Langraw, Rule Water, Roxburghshire, was born in 1804. His father, who was a native of that Border county, had been for some time a woollen manufacturer in Huddersfield, but ultimately returned to his native locality, and betook himself to farming. Mr Oliver used to tell that when he was a very little boy, in those days of difficulty in travelling, his father once took him behind him on horseback the whole way from Teviotdale to Yorkshire. Mr Oliver, not being strong, was encouraged by his father to indulge in rural exercises, and he spent much of his early life in fishing and shooting. The home of the family was at this time at Mossburnford, on the Jed, three or four miles above Jedburgh, in one of the most beautiful districts of Scotland, where he had every facility for gratifying his taste for quiet country life. Naturally retiring and diffident, he was thought-

ful and eager in the pursuit of knowledge. From Mossburnford he removed to Langraw, a small estate in Rule Water, which had become his own property. He was fond of music, and had great skill and taste as a player on the violin. He visited America in 1839 for the benefit of his health, and on his return he published a small volume, entitled "Eight Months in Illinois, which he dedicated to the working-men of Roxburghshire. The book was favourably noticed. For several years Mr Oliver acted as factor on the estate of Sir Walter Elliot of Wolflee.

It was always a source of pride and satisfaction to him to remember that his mother and Sir Walter Scott were full cousins; and he regretted that once, when a very little fellow, Sir Walter, on calling on his mother, had expressed a wish to see him, but that, with his characteristic shyness, he had refused to be presented. Mr Oliver was fond of books, and the love of literature was a leading part of his nature. He was an authority in etymology, and a contributor to *Notes and Queries*, and was intimately familiar with Chaucer and Shakespeare. He used to say that, in his opinion, the novels of Scott could better stand repeated reading than any other works of fiction. As a poet, Mr Oliver's verses give indication of much delicacy of thought, philosophical bias, and appreciation of the beautiful. "The Capon Tree," "The Last Fairy," and "The Tushielaw Thorn" possess much merit, and are well worthy of preservation.

Some years before his death Mr Oliver sold his estate of Langraw, and settled with his family in Edinburgh, where, on account of failing health, he withdrew entirely from public view. He died in March 1878, in his 75th year.

We subjoin a few stanzas from his poem on the "Capon Tree," a very old and famous oak, about a

mile above Jedburgh, and one of the only two surviving relics of Jed Forest—the other being known as the "King of the Wood."

THE CAPON TREE.

Old Capon tree, old Capon tree
Thou standest telling of the past;
Of Jedworth's forest, wild and free,
Thou art alone, forsaken, lost.
Thou witness of dark ages gone,
Ere time doth lay his scythe on thee,
I fain would know what thou hast known,
Thou sere and time-worn Capon tree.

Jed wandered at its own sweet will,
When thy green spring time first began;
The wolf's lone howl the glades would fill,
As through their moonlit depths he ran;
The antlered deer, with ears alert
Would listen to his deadly foe,
Then bound away with panting heart
O'er ridge of oak, through brake of sloe.

Say, did'st thou flourish when these bands,—
The eternal city's legioned ones,
Did strike their prows 'gainst Albyn's sands,
To combat with her savage sons?
And did the breeze, as passing by
It whispered through thy spreading boughs,
Bear on the Roman battle-cry,
And answering shriek of painted foes?

And did the startled deer upspring
From thy wide top's far spreading shade;
And did the wild bull's bellow ring
Through forest, scaur, and tangled glade,
As that unwonted battle-cry
The breeze through Jedworth's forest bore—
Now forest, Roman, all gone by;
Rome's tongue a memory—no more.

The hoary Druid blessed thy shade,
And held thee sacred, mystic tree;
What were the gods to whom he prayed,
What sort of faith had he in thee
Hast thou e'er seen the sacred knife—
The breast of human victim bared,
Or, when the blood ebb'd with his life,
His agonizing shrieking heard?

Old Capon tree thou must have seen
That of all creatures on this earth,
Man to his kind has falsest been
And cruelest; yet there is mirth,
And joy, and love, and goodness much,
Oh, would that, in a world so fair,
The beautiful man's heart might touch,
That crime-born sound were more rare.

Rough savage hordes, with stealthy stride,
Have wandered 'mid thy brethren hoar;
And many a host in warlike pride,
Has passed thee in the days of yore;
And holy monk and castellane,
And knight and baron debonair,
Have mingled in the glancing train,
With courtly prince and lady fair.

Ah! did'st thou see that hapless queen,
The fair, the wronged, not blameless Mary?
She wandered sure 'mong paths so sheen,
When at fair Jedworth she would tarry;
And did the fays among the boughs
Not pine to see their charms surpassed?
Ah! sunk beneath most cruel woes,
Unenvied was her fate at last.

'Twas in yon glen that Richmond's knight
Was caught by Douglas in the toil;
In vain were numbers, valour, might,—
The well-planned ambush all could foil;
Entrapped and conquered all, or slain,
It was the Southern's fate to yield,
And Douglas from his king did gain
Another blazon to his shield.

Old Ferniherst, whose battled keep
Still towers embosomed in the woods,
Where now all warlike echoes sleep,
Has rung to sounds of Border feuds;
The English, Scotch, and Frenchman's shout,
The clang of arms, the victim's wail,
The din of onslaught, siege, and rout
Have sped along thy native vale.

With thee, old tree, I live again,
To wander through Jed's forest wide,
To see the mail-clad warrior train
Upon some Border foray ride;
To hear the clang of hound and horn,
See falcon's stoop and heron's wile;

Hear matin chime at grey-eyed morn,
From fair St Mary's hallowed fane.

Sweet Jedworth, nestling in the vale,
Surrounded by the forest lone,
Thy beauties graced the minstrel's tale
And oft to princely guests were known.
No princes now with thee remain,
Thy ancient woods are wede away;
The winds sweep through thy ruined fane;
And monks and abbots,—where are they?

I love not the unsparing hate
That would all ancient things reject;
Nothing that e'er has been held great,
Or good, or true, deserves neglect;
And though we many errors find,
These errors once were viewed as sooth,
Were labours of the human mind
Struggling, as yet mind is, for truth.

The human ocean-stream rolls on
With hidden depths and ceaseless tide;
A single wave, now ages gone,
Will never in effect subside,
But still, though all unmarked by man,
Will modify the heaving whole;
Some acted thought, through all life's span
Shall tincture every living soul.

And now, old Capon tree, farewell!
There is an awe bred by the thought
That thou, with silent tongue, dost tell
Of swarming millions graveward brought—
Fallen, as thou hast shed thy leaves,
That glory, honour, gladness, shame,
That every passion which still heaves
The breast, was and will be the same.

WILLIAM DUTHIE JEFFREY

WAS born at Boghead, parish of Fyvie, in 1845—his father being then foreman on the farm of Lethin. Three years afterwards the family removed to Drummies, near Inverurie, where they resided four years. It was while there that the subject of our notice was first sent to school—at the Chapel of Garioch—where he remained until the family again removed to the Burgh of Inverurie, and thence to several farms in the district, to settle for some six years at Auchincruive, Methlick. When nine years of age we find William engaged as a "herd laddie," receiving for a month's services (the period he remained at his first place) "a bundle of wool, and a piece of bread and butter." "Having," he says, "to tramp all the way from Lethin to Auchincruive on foot, I got very tired, and several times by the way I laid down my pack, and threw away quantities to lighten my bundle. Before I got home I had scarcely the half of it left." It was during his "herding days" that he first read Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," and so enamoured was he with this pastoral poem that he committed the most of it to memory. He afterwards came across Ross's "Helenore," the perusal of which thrilled him with delight, and inspired him with a desire that he might "yet be able to do something of the same kind." It was when an "orra loon" that he first tried his hand at verse-making, the result being a poem entitled "My Muckle Gully." He soon afterwards had the pleasure of seeing his productions in the columns of one of the Peterhead newspapers.

After many "ups and downs"—sometimes as an "orra hand" about a farm "toun," and occasionally as a "sawyer" in the woods of Fintray, our poet became an apprentice shoemaker, and, as is common still

in some rural districts, he "got the hairsts" to himself. During his apprenticeship, and some years afterwards, he made tours to places of interest throughout Scotland—visiting the lands of Burns, Hogg, Ramsay, and Scott; the Northern, Perth, and Inverness Highlands—indeed, very few working men have seen so much of their native land and various parts of Great Britain as our poet has. The scenes he has visited are described with graphic power in pleasing verse, and we believe he is at present revising several lengthy descriptive poems, and a selection of a miscellaneous nature, with the view of publishing them ere long in book form.

Mr Jeffrey has, in a measure, inherited the distinguished musical gifts of his "forbears," and can play the violin and the bagpipes with considerable skill. He at present resides with his parents at Auchneive, near Old Meldrum, his constitution having become somewhat shattered by repeated attacks of rhumatic fever. He has contributed with much acceptance to the poet's corner of several of the Aberdeen, Dundee, and Glasgow newspapers, and literary journals. The specimens of his muse that he has submitted to us describe the beauties of Nature with much sweetness, and show neatness of phrase and freshness of imagery. His treatment of the various phases of life is healthy, fresh, and genial, like the air of his native hills, and are creditable alike to his head and heart. D. 1892.

FARE-YE-WEEL AULD THACKIT HOOSIE.

AIR—"Roy's wife o' Aldivalloch."

Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie,
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie,
I'll ne'er forget the happy hours
I've spent beside your ingle cosy.

I'm wae to lea'e my neebours a',
Aroun' me here, sae kind an' cheery ;
But, O, I'm fley'd that ye micht fa',
An' me aneath your riggin' bury.
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

I'm wae to lea'e thae bonnie flowers
That I aroun' your dook-cheeks plaited,
Whaur aft I've sitten—aye, for hours—
On bonnie simmer days an' knitted.
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

I'm wae to lea'e yon auld feal-dyke
Whaur I my joe met whan a kimmer ;
Whaur whins an' broom thegither cleik,
An' bumbees big their bykes in simmer.
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

I'm wae to lea'e yon burnie, wi'
Its fairy linns an' fraithy potties,
Whaurin, whan but a lassikie,
I've paidl't aft wi' kittit coaties.
Fare-ye-wee, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

I'm wae to lea'e yon bonnie wuds
Whaurin I've gather'd flowerets mony,
In blythe spring days, 'mang burstin' buds,
An' birdies singin' sweet an' bonnie.
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

I'm wae to lea'e the bonnie braes
O' Benachie and Howe o' Garioch,
Whaurin I've spent sae mony days
'Mang freen's an' scenes that never weary.
Fare-ye-weel, auld thackit hoosie, etc.

THE HEATHERY HILLS O' DEE.

Oh, for yon hills, yon bonnie hills,
Abune whaur I was born,
Amang the glintin', sheeny rills,
The kye, an' wavin' corn ;
For, oh, there's nae anither place
That's half sae dear to me,
As yon rugged country place amang
The heathery hills o' Dee.

Oh, for yon shiel', yon dear auld shiel',
Beneath the broomy brae,
Where we were wont to rant an' reel
In youth's bricht, happy day ;

For, oh, there's nae anither shiel'
That's half sae dear to me,
As yon dear, auld thackit shiel' amang
The heathery hills o' Dee.

Oh, for yon burn, yon roarin' burn,
That dashes doon the howe
Wi' mony a gracefu' sweep an' turn,
By scaur an' craggy knowe ;
For, oh, there's nae anither burn
That half sae dear to me,
As yon bonnie, crookit burn amang
The heathery hills o' Dee.

Oh, for yon bower, yon bosky bower,
Abune the deep ravine,
Where I've spent mony a happy hour
Wi' my dear Mary Jean ;
For, oh, there's nae anither bower
That's half sae dear to me,
As yon bonnie, fragrant bower amang
The heathery hills o' Dee.

JESSIE ANNIE.

AIR—"Wha wadna fecht for Charlie."

Jessie Annie, Jessie Annie,
Lovely, little Jessie Ann ;
Ruby lippies sweet as honey,
Facie bricht as summer sun.

Witchin', winsome, flochtriff fairy,
Winna till her beddie gang ;
Cheekies red as ony cheery,
Daffin' on the haill day lang.

Was there ever sic a queanie ?
Never oot o' mammy's han' ;
Gin she dinna steek her eenie,
Come an' tak' her, Bougie man.

Megsty, lassie, hide your headie,
Here's him comin' clampin' ben,
Wi' his muckle mou' sae greedy,
Gashled teeth, an' glowrin' een.

Come nae here, ye muckle Bougie,
Jessie Annie's sleepin' soun' ;
Gang an' tak' yon waukriff roguie—
Hear him skirlin' up the toon.

Whishtie noo, an' gie's a kissie,
Muckle Bougie man's awa' ;
He's nae gettin' mammy's lassie—
She's noo in her beddie baw.

Sleep aside your ain dear mammy,
An' she'll sit an' sing to you ;
Hushie, baloo, bonnie lammie,
Hushie, baloo, bonnie doo.

Angels frae a' danger guard you
While you tread this warld o' care ;
Heaven wi' endless bliss reward you
When you've focht life's battle here.
Jessie Annie, Jessie Annie, etc.

CHARMING LITTLE MINNIE, O.

Come to my arms, my bonnie doo,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O ;
For, O, wha is't that doesna lo'e
Charming little Minnie, O ?

You're just a little angel fair,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O,
Committed to our loving care,
Charming little Minnie, O.

Noo dance wi' joy upo' my knee,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O,
An' clap your little hands wi' glee,
Charming little Minnie, O.

You're noo the licht o' oor fire en',
Lichtsome, loesome quynie, O ;
Your bonnie sel' we mauna tine,
Charming little Minnie, O.

Wi' sic a treasure wha could froon,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O ;
You've lifted a' oor cares abune,
Charming little Minnie, O.

Gude's presence aye wi' you abide,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O,
An' thro' life's chequered paths you guide,
Charming little Minnie, O.

An' mony days yet may you see,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O ;
An' happy, happy may they be,
Charming little Minnie, O.

Then, when you bid this warld adieu,
Lichtsome, lo'esome quynie, O,
A Heavenly croon adorn your broo,
Charming little Minnie, O.

MISTRESS MOUSE.

(Caught in a Cup-and-Bowl-Trap).

Gude save us a' ! whaur am I noo ?
There's something fa'n upon my riggin'—
A something wi' an awfu' mou'—
I've gotten this for my stravaigin'.

I wonner whaur I'm to get oot ;
I rather fear I'm fairly trappit ;
It seems gey close a' roun' aboot—
Oh, had I sprung afore it drappit.

I'll try an' ease the brim o't up,
An' see gin I can warstle oot o't ;
Eh ! what's this noo ?—a lugless cup ;
Mair devilment, there's little doot o't.

To lift it I hae little power—
Plague on't, I canna get a grip o't ;
I'm only dingin't farther owre,
But canna win aneath the lip o't.

Alack, that ever I cam' here,
An' wae's my heart for her that bore me ;
This cursèd thing's been set, I'll swear,
Wi' the intent to kill or smore me.

Oh, had I ta'en the guid advice
That my auld, thochtfu' minnie ga'e me ;
But, in my ain conceit aye wise,
I thocht that naething could gainsay me.

She tauld me weel to keep a guid
Look oot aye whaur I was a stranger,
And never lat my thievish greed
My blinkers blin' whaur there was danger.

Likewise she bade me keep aloof
Frae man, for he was wondrous cunnin' ;
I've o' her words noo ample proof
To ken she wasna wi' me funnin'.

I thocht wi' a' the different kin's
O' mouse-traps I was weel acquainted ;

Even the latest oot designs,
By modern artisans invented.

The thread an' wire, the spring an' catch,
The cage an' table in the centre—
For a' thae kin's I've been a match,
Nor did I very near them venture.

But this one's fairly cheated me
That I'm noo sittin' cow'rin' under ;
An' nocht but its simplicity
Has gar'd me play this fatal blunder.

Had I my liberty again,
Again I wadna be sae silly
As throw't awa', as I've here dune,
To satisfy my greedy belly.

"We're often wise ahint the han' ;"
Ay, that's a true proverb'al sayin',
Which I noo fully understan'—
The piper for't I'm sweetly payin'.

Oh, may my bairnies, ane an' a',
A warnin' tak' by me their minnie,
An' may they never chance to fa'
As I hae dune here sae uncannie.

Fareweel, to a' my kith an' kin,
Savoury stores, an' mealy pouches ;
'Mang these I'll never mair noo rin—
I've fa'n at last in death's cauld clutches.

JOHN AUSTEN BIGGS

STRIKES the lyre occasionally with spirit and power. He is a native of Inverness, and was born in 1844. His father was for many years a Macer in the Court of Session, and afterwards hotelkeeper, but being unsuccessful he lost his entire means. John is the third child of a family of seven sons and one

daughter. The family went to reside in Edinburgh when he was six years of age. Having received the main part of his education at Newington Academy, and made good use of his opportunities there, he became a pupil of the celebrated Dr John Smith, dental surgeon to the Queen—a man of rare genius, and a distinguished scholar, painter, and sculptor, who not only soared to the highest attainable position in his own profession, but threw honour and lustre upon it as President of the Royal College of Surgeons. Under such a master, then, who was kind, generous, and encouraging, it is no matter of surprise that our poet's latent powers began to develop in no ordinary way, so much so that in all the mechanical arts he became an adept.

After acting for some time as principal assistant to Dr Smith, Mr Biggs went to London, and thence to Exeter. He remained in the latter city for about twelve months, when he removed to Glasgow, and acted as head-assistant to Dr Macpherson for about thirteen years, when that gentleman died. Mr Biggs then began on his own account, and at present he has a practice, a name, and a fame as a dental practitioner second to few in the city. He also has repeatedly given evidence of the possession of a highly-cultured taste for painting and sculptor work, which a large practice alone prevents him from fully developing. He finds time, however, to hold several public appointments, which, if not lucrative, are at least highly honourable—his latest being his election as vice-president of the Odonto-Chirurgical Society of Scotland.

It was during his pupilage with Dr Smith that Mr Biggs first began to write in verse. Unfortunately many of his best pieces have been lost by an accident through fire. As a poet, he is not ambitious. He writes merely as a pastime, and considering the very busy life he leads, it is somewhat surprising that his

imagination is capable of flight. But he is essentially a many-sided genius, and the fountain of poesy within him will well up. His felicity of language, aptness of illustration, condensation of thought, touching pathos, national enthusiasm, with a vein of native humour, and the fine interblending of the sympathetic with the vigorous, all go to stamp him as a true poet.

TO THE LARK.

Oh happy bird that soars so high—
That to the gates of heaven draws nigh,
As if tired of the world below—
Its strifes, and hurryings to and fro.

Is't that thou'lt better see the sun,
Or hear'st thou music little one
From out "the gates ajar" to swell—
That thou delight'st on high to dwell?

Dost thou forget thine humble birth,
Thy lowly nest in mossy earth;
Or is it love that thrills thy breast—
Thine eye on her within thy nest?

. . . .

Ring out thy music from above!—
More than thy mate thou charm'st with love,
Thou sing'st of hope, joy, home, to me—
When I shall upward soar like thee.

Confined by duty like thy mate
I must abide this earthly state;
But light, love, music, freely given,
Fall round me every day from heaven.

Thanks little lark!—more glad than thee
More tuneful too I'll shortly be,
At home with angels in that clime
Where all is harmony sublime.

THE GRAVE OF ELLA REE.

Shine forth fair moon, in brighter radiance bloom!
More light impart than my dull eyes may see
Where coldly lieth in her silent tomb
My much-beloved, my little Ella Ree.

Here is the spot, some loving heart and hand
Hath laid upon her grave a lovely rose;
Oh flower, how emblematical you stand
Of her sweet withered life and her repose.

The dew has gem'd thy leaves—like tears withal,
Fair rose! thou'st know no sorrow until now—
One beauty mourning for another's fall—
Lovely in life, now keeping Nature's vow.

My love, my pretty Ella Ree, thou'rt gone,
And after you my yearning life o'erflows;
Oh death relentless, with heart cold as stone,
Thy shadow's by our side until life's close.

Dear Ella Ree, I leave thee with the dead;
Breathe soft O wind, moon, stars look down and see,
Oh guard this spot—this hallow'd bed
Of my beloved, who's all in all to me.

PADDY'S WOOING.

Tune—"Rory O' More."

Oh, Biddy, mavourneen, me dear, an' me dove,
Me heart, sure, is dying with purest of love;
Oh, Biddy, me darlin', thine eye is so bright,
Bad luck! but it keeps me awake all the night.
Oh, Biddy, me jewel, for Pat never fear;
Sure, what is the r'ason of that diamond tear?
I'll steal't with the kiss of your true lover, Dan,
And then "Father Tom" will make us into one.

Ah, Dan, but your love is not lasting and true;
If I gave you me hand, you soon would it rue;
The heart you would win from an innocent maid
For some prettier face you would leave soon to fade.
Then, Paddy, don't flatter, and call me your dear,
You shan't have a kiss 'though I may shed a tear;
Oh, the sun in the sky his place sooner would lave
Than this heart of mine, Dan, would ever deceave.

Oh, Biddy, acushla, your fears all dispel;
One kiss, and this fire in me bosom expel;
Don't say that I flatter—indeed, you'r me dear,
And this very same moment I'll kiss off that tear,—
And he did it, till Biddy gave her swate consent,
And never since then had she cause to repent
That pity she took on her true-hearted Dan,
For e'er since that day their two hearts have been one.

Now, all young men in love, take a lesson from this,
If you wish to drink deep of the essence of bliss,
Seek out some young lass, and of her love make sure,
She will mend many sorrows you never could cure,
And follow Dan's plan—"Sure that same is the way,"
For, moind you, there's danger where there is delay—
Get your Biddy Mavourneen, and off to the praste,
And meself and the rest will all help at the feast.

THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW—EDINBURGH, 1861.

Strike up the drums, ye gods of war,
Let martial music cheer our ears,
Sound out the nation's praise afar,
And with her praise the Volunteers!

Thou land of freedom! Scotland grand!
Which never owned a foreign power,
See mustering round your rocky strand
Your sons to guard each pass and tower!

Sons of the brave and mighty dead!
For help your country never pleads;
Glad sires look down, while in their stead
You now repeat their noble deeds!

Like lion—Scotia's emblem crest—
Defend your rights unvauntingly—
Peace ne'er shall slumber in your breast
While foes menace her tauntingly.

No fear of thy victorious stand
For thy loved country and her Queen,
'Gainst all her foes, by sea or land,
Thou'lt ne'er be beat, nor once give in!

How pleased was Britain's honoured Queen,
As she reviewed her Volunteers!
On her bright face a smile was seen,
And in her eyes came happy tears.

Oh, happy country; honoured men,
Whose loyalty their Queen thus moved,
Closer those tears shall draw us when—
If e'er—our love has to be proved.

O'er Britain guard, Blest God of Peace,
Thy prosperous blessings spread afar;
Long may the echoing trumpet cease
From publishing the call of war;

Long live our loved, our noble Queen ;
Let love and joy fill all her years ;
She counts our Scottish hearts, I ween,
Among her bravest Volunteers.

TO A VIOLET.

One morning, in a lonely hour,
While walking, musing leisurely,
I came upon a pretty flower
That modestly peeped up at me.

A lovely face had this sweet flower,
And dress of leaves so simple—fair—
It might have graced a queenly bower,
Although it seemed contented there.

Closer I stooped to scan its face,
And, lo ! its cheek with dew was wet ;
I longed to fold it in embrace—
Such beauty I had seldom met.

"No more," said I, "thou lovely thing,
Shalt thou here lead a hermit life ;
I'll plant thee near my garden spring,
In grove where whispering love is rife.

Come, leave this unfrequented spot ;
Abide with me—my dwelling share ;
Friends visit oft my little cot,
And thou wilt be admired there."

T' its natal nook the flower did cling ;
To force it I was gently rude,
Before I could its tendrels bring
Away from its lone solitude.

When native air that cheered was flown,
Like hearts which pine for times gone by,
In spite of love around them strewn,
So did my violet fade and die.

So have I known of beauty, prized
For purpose of a lewd desire,
Soon droop through modesty despised—
Man plucked the flower but to expire.

Oh, if dishonour, 'mid earth's strife,
Should tempt for gain from what is true,
Than yield, Lord, let me lay down life,
To bloom at its sweet source anew.

ALEXANDER SNADDON,

LETTER-CARRIER, is a tenderly pathetic poet. He was born at the once thriving hamlet of Collyland, Clackmannanshire, in 1842. When about ten years of age he left school, where he gave good promise, to become a "piecer" in a mill at Alva. He had a long distance to travel to and from his work, a serious matter to a young lad, especially in cold, wintry weather. Several years having been spent in the mill, our bard chose the loom as the next step in the ladder of life. We are told by the writer of a sketch of his career in the columns of the *Tillicoultry News*, (to which we are indebted for the particulars here given), that it was while an apprentice weaver that the Muse began to pay him desultory visits. Weaving is rather a musical trade—the steady tramp of the treadles, the click of the lay, and the softened whir of the shuttle all combining to evoke pleasant feelings, and prompt to joint harmony in minds of a contemplative and reflective turn. His first effusion appeared in the *Alloa Journal*, and from that period he has assiduously cultivated his poetical talents, and has continued to employ his leisure hours in storing his mind.

For several years Snaddon continued to ply the shuttle, till the fancy struck him to remove to the classic scenes of Ettrick and Tweed, where he was employed for some time, occasionally taking long rambles among the scenes and ruins rendered immortal by the touch of genius. These produced a mystical influence in his soul, and several of his lyrics have been devoted to their commemoration. Returning again to the "hame o' his youth," he took up his abode in the picturesque village of Sauchie, and is presently letter-carrier for the district—his agreeable

manners and general intelligence rendering him a favourite with all classes. In the words of the sketch already referred to—"In the greening days of spring, the glowing beauty of full blown summer, and the soft and sweet decline of autumn, his rambles are rich in most delicious pleasure and health invigorating influences. The Muse then visits him in gilded robes, and his note-book becomes the receptacle of her delightful promptings. These he has carefully preserved with the purpose at an early date of giving them to the public in a collected form." His thoughts and sentiments are generally pure and elevating. He gives several excellent "peeps" into the homely hearth and domestic affections—indeed, we think he excels in the pathetic vein, many of his lyrics being calculated to touch deeply the finer feelings of our nature.

THE WEE TOOM CHAIR.

Oh, dear ! oh dear ! lay up that chair,
Wherein my lambie sat,
Wha played aboot the clean hearthstane,
And cuddled his wee cat.
The chair is toom, my bairn's awa'—
Gane to the world above,
Whaur he has joined with happy saints,
Beside the God of Love.

Nae mair I'll press him to my breast,
Nor kiss his kindly mou' ;
Or shed his hair back frae his een
That hangs doon owre his broo.
My heart grows grit ts see his toys—
His rattle, ring, and ba'—
A' noo laid up upon the shelf :
He's gane and left them a'.

Row up his claes, my ain dear wife,
And lay them a' clean by ;
See, there's his buits and stockings a',
His bannet and his tie.
Tak' them awa', a' frae my view—
His toys and empty chair—
They bring the saut tears to my een,
And mak' my heart fu' sair.

Still in my dreams I see his smile,
His sonsie little face;
His cheery laugh rings in my ear,
I miss his sweet embrace.
How oft he pressed his cheek to mine,
When climbin' on my knee,
And twined his arms around my neck,
And danced wi' infant glee.

The gowden sun that shines abune,
That mak's the birdie's sing,
Sune brings the little bairnies oot
To welcome in sweet spring;
And when I see them at their play,
My heart aye aches wi' pain
To ken my bairn's noo left us a',
Ne'er to return again.

THE ROAD THAT'S NEVER TOOM.

Just gang alang the country road,
Or through a muckle toon,
You're sure to find the hearse rig'd out
Wi' horses black or broon;
In ony hour in a' the day,
It's seen wi' dread and gloom,
To bear the silent dead alang
The road that's never toom.

Or tak the papers in your hand,
And read the numerous names
O' those who're slain by cruel death,
And borne to their lang hames;
Or dander to the auld kirkyard,
The sexton's at some tomb,
Preparing aye for them that gang
The road that's never toom.

A day we canna ca' oor ain,
Nor brag aboot an hoor,
For time's uncertain to us a',
The rich as weel's the poor;
The king that sits upon his throne,
The weaver at his loom,
Are on a level when they gang
The road that's never toom.

Baith auld and young are seen to go
To fill some narrow grave
From whence they'll ne'er return again,
The coward nor the brave;

Noo let us a' keep aye in mind
Oor ain dark day of doom,
When we oorsel's will hae to gang
The road that's never toom.

Tho' death may pass oor door to-day,
Perhaps he'll ca' to-morrow,
And lead us to yon dismal spot
Where friends are left in sorrow.
We sometimes think we canna dee
When we are in oor bloom,
But ah! fu' sune we'll hae to gang
The road that's never toom.

When youth and health are on oor side
We seldom think of death,
Nor meeting wi' a God aboon
Awa frae this sad earth;
But ah! some day we'll slip awa',
And ithers fill oor room,
For this we ken, we'll hae to gang
The road that's never toom.

A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWA ON A TREE.

A bird in the hand is worth twa on a tree,
For the ane is secure while the ithers micht flee;
You can dae what you will wi' the ane that you hae,
But the rest are awa' frae you and frae me.

You may use a' your skill to catch many more,
But the moment you try they flee frae your door;
Altho' its on land or far owre the sea,
You are better wi' ane than twa on a tree.

There's folk in this world live on naething but hope,
Expecting a fortune frae the King or the Pope;
But sure I can tell you, if you've something your ain,
You'll gang kindly to it, and withoot ony pain.

While you travel along on earth's stony way,
Be content wi' your lot by night and by day;
Tho' your income be sma', your fortune, or fee,
You are better wi' ane than twa on a tree.

Industry, I ken, is the pride of our land,
It always brings comfort and peace aye sae grand;
But there's some folk I ken that are never content,
Tho' the land was a' theirs withoot ony rent.

Just gang to the cottar, you'll find him aye gay,
Contriving out plans in mony a way;
But at last he'll gae in wi' you and agree,
That ane is worth mair than twa on a tree.

Whatever you claim through industry or gain,
Tak very guid care and don't spend it in vain;
For its easier to keep the thing that you hae,
Than to grasp at the birds that flee far away.

So dinna sit doon to grumble and freet
Because your ain neighboors can get mair to eat;
But be wise for yoursel' and let ithers abee,
For you're better wi' ane than twa on a tree.

WHEN GLOAMIN' COVERS A'.

When gloamin' comes at evening fa',
And covers a' the scene,
I wrap my plaidie roond my neck
To gang and see my Jean;
She stays beside the bonnie burn,
That rows between the lea,
Whaur we baith meet wi' hearts sae warm,
Combined until we dee.
Nane comes nearer to my heart
Than my dear lassie Jean,
That meets me by the singing burn
At gloamin' shades at e'en.

Ae smile frae Jeanie's comely face,
Ae kiss frae her sweet mou'
Is worth a crown of jewels bright,
That hangs doon ower the broo;
Her heart is purer than the stream,
That sweetly glides alang,
Her voice is sweeter than the birds,
When at their bonnie sang.
Nane comes nearer, &c.

Her een are like the stars abune,
Sae pure and bright at e'en,
There's nane I see I could compare
Wi' my ain lassie Jean;
Oh, for the time, the happy time,
When gloamin' covers a',
To meet wi' Jeanie by the burn,
Doon by the hazel shaw.
Nane comes nearer, &c.

BE KIND TO THE BAIRNS.

Oh, be kind to the bairns, be guid to them a',
Take pity on them for their mither's awa;
Look after their weelfare, and keep them aye clean,
And shield them frae harm when danger is seen.

Oh, be kind to the bairns their mither is dead,
Their faither too sleeps in the same narrow bed;
And aye hae a care for the tender and young,
And see they're weel taught baith in deed and in tongue.

Oh, be kind to the bairns, when wi' them you fa' in,
And gie them a share of the bread that you win,
Impress a sweet kiss on their wee tender moos,
And shed back the hair that hings o'er their broos.

Oh, be kind to the bairns, look after them weel,
And see that ye cleed them frae head to the heel,
For noo they are friendless, withoot hame or ha',
Since their faither and mither are dead and awa.

Oh, be kind to the bairns, they're helpless and weak,
Assist them in trouble and when they are sick,
Dae a' that you can to help them aye on,
Be guid to them a', for their mither is gone.

Oh, be kind to the bairns, and see them a' fed,
For these are the words their kind mither aye said,
She fondly caress'd them and clappit them a',—
So be guid to the bairns, noo she's dead and awa.

JAMES CLERK MAXWELL, F.R.S.

FEW names are more distinguished in the annals of modern science than the subject of this sketch. His studies and researches were chiefly in the highest departments of physics and mathematics, in the halls of science at home and abroad, and in the Royal Society and other learned bodies.

James Clerk Maxwell was born at Edinburgh in

1831. His father bore in his veins the blood of two old Scottish families—the Midlothian Clerks and the Dumfriesshire Maxwells. His grandfather, John Clerk, younger brother of Sir George Clerk Maxwell of Penicuik, was the author of a famous book on "Naval Tactics." His eldest son, John, became Lord Eldin, a Judge of the Court of Session, noted for his shrewdness and wit, as well as for legal lore; and another uncle, "Willie Clerk," was the friend and comrade of Walter Scott in their early years. When Sir George Clerk succeeded to Penicuik, Sir John, the younger son, became proprietor of Middlebie, which descended to him from his grandmother, Dorothea, Lady Maxwell, and had to be held separate from the Midlothian estate. James Clerk Maxwell was an only son. He was born in Edinburgh, but for some years his parents lived chiefly at Glenlair, a small property saved from the once wide domains of Middlebie, most of which had passed into other hands.

The adage that the child is father of the man was notably verified in Clerk Maxwell. In his earliest years he was full of wonder and curiosity, and was persistent in being told the causes of things. "How" the house bells were rung, the way the water travels from the pond, past the bridge and mill and smiddy, till it gets to the sea, where the ships sail, were amongst the wonders and studies of his childhood. When walking with his nurse, she usually had to come home laden with plants, stones, and miscellaneous "finds," all of which were laid out on the table till his parents told him all about each object. As the years went on he was as ingenious with his hands as he had been observant with his eyes. His love of nature and of out-door exercise did not interfere with his appetite for book learning. His knowledge of the Bible was extensive and minute, and when only eight years of age he could repeat the whole of the

119th Psalm. His mother guided his education in his early years, and gave a bias to his tastes and feelings. At the age of fourteen he got the mathematical medal in his class in the Edinburgh High School, also the prize for English verse, and held a high place in classical scholarship. In 1846 he went to the University of Edinburgh, where he attended classes during three sessions. Here he distinguished himself in Natural Philosophy, and soon burst into a splendour of reputation. It was an unusual thing for papers to be communicated to the Royal Society by a youth of sixteen, which the President described as ingenious and original. He continued his studies at Cambridge, where it is stated that he succeeded by sheer strength of intellect in coming out as second wrangler. When only in his twenty-sixth year he was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen. Here his lectures were listened to with an attention and pleasure similar to that with which his books were afterwards read, while the students were always attracted by the frankness of his manner, the singular charm of his quaint and original remarks, the richness of his imagination, the swiftness of his wit, the profundity of his genius, and his unvarying kindliness. The clearness of his teaching, and the contagion of his enthusiasm, is said to have impelled the mind of Cambridge to a fresh course of real investigation. When the Marischal College Chair was abolished by the fusion of the two Aberdeen Universities into one, he received the appointment of Professor in King's College, London. This post he held for six years, when he resigned, and retired to his country seat in Dumfriesshire. Five years afterwards he accepted the Chair of Experimental Physics at Cambridge—a post which he held till his death in 1879.

We have little space left to refer to the scientific researches of our poet on colour, electricity, astronomy,

and molecular physics, or the study of the nature and properties of the ultimate molecules of which material objects are made. His essay on the nature of Saturn's rings was characterised by Sir George Airy as "one of the most remarkable applications of mathematics to physics that I have ever seen;" and his famous discourse on molecules at the British Association meeting in 1873 made a profound impression, and has perhaps been more frequently quoted than any of his published works. The close of that discourse was a noble avowal of his belief in the Divine power and wisdom by which the worlds were made, and showed clearly his attitude towards the materialistic doctrines of some men of science. Indeed, he had an innate reverence for sacred things, and his own aspirations after pure light and grace are expressed in the poem we quote, "A Student's Evening Hymn." A feature, too, in Clerk Maxwell's character was his sense of humour—a sportive play of intellect he carried into the loftiest arguments of science, as well as into several well-sustained serio-comic poems. His many-sided character — the quaintness of his humour, the penetration of his intellect, and his poetical powers, (only occasionally exercised as a mere relaxation), all combine to form a rare and fascinating picture. He possessed all the happy qualities that make up the sum total of the true poetic nature. By permission of the publishers of his "Biography," (Messrs Macmillan & Co.), in which Lewis Campbell, M.A., LL.D., professor of Greek in the University of St Andrews, and William Garnett, M.A., principal of Durham College of Science, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, present a vivid picture of the facts of his life, and of the essential qualities of his character, we are enabled to give the following selection of his poems from that instructive and delightful volume:—

I'VE HEARD THE RUSHING.

I've heard the rushing of mountain torrents, gushing
Down through the rocks, in a cataract of spray,
Onward to the ocean;
Swift seemed their motion,
Till, lost in the desert, they dwindled away.

I've learnt the story of all human glory,
I've felt high resolves growing weaker every day,
Till cares, springing round me,
With creeping tendrils bound me,
And all I once hoped for was wearing fast away.

I've seen the river rolling on for ever,
Silent and strong, without tumult or display.
In the desert arid,
Its waters never tarried,
Till far out at sea we still found them on their way.

Now no more weary we faint in deserts dreary,
Toiling alone till the closing of the day;
All now is righted,
Our souls flow on united,
Till the years and their sorrows have all died away.

A STUDENT'S EVENING HYMN.

Now no more the slanting rays
With the mountain summits dally,
Now no more in crimson blaze
Evening's fleecy cloudlets rally,
Soon shall Night from off the valley
Sweep that bright yet earthly haze,
And the stars most musically
Move in endless rounds of praise.

While the world is growing dim,
And the sun is slow descending
Past the far horizon's rim,
Earth's low sky to heaven extending,
Let my feeble earth-notes, blending
With the songs of cherubim,
Through the same expanse ascending,
Thus renew my evening hymn.

Thou that fill'st our waiting eyes
With the food of contemplation,
Setting in thy darkened skies
Signs of infinite creation,

Grant to nightly meditation
What the toilsome day denies—
Teach me in this earthly station
Heavenly Truth to realise.

Give me wisdom so to use
These brief hours of thoughtful leisure,
That I may no instant lose
In mere meditative pleasure,
But with strictest justice measure
All the ends my life pursues,
Lies to crush and truths to treasure,
Wrong to shun and Right to choose.

Then, when unexpected Sleep,
O'er my long-closed eyelids stealing,
Opens up that lower deep
Where Existence has no feeling,
May sweet Calm, my languor healing,
Lend me strength at dawn to reap
All that Shadows, world-concealing,
For the bold inquirer keep.

Through the creatures Thou hast made
Show the brightness of Thy glory,
Be eternal Truth displayed
In their substance transitory,
Till green Earth and Ocean hoary,
Massy rock and tender blade
Tell the same unending story—
"We are Truth in Form arrayed."

When to study I retire,
And from books of ancient sages
Glean fresh sparks of buried fire
Lurking in their ample pages—
While the task my mind engages
Let old words new truths inspire—
Truths that to all after-ages
Prompt the thoughts that never tire.

Yet, if led by shadows fair,
I have uttered words of folly,
Let the kind absorbing air
Stifle every sound unholy.
So when Saints with Angels lowly
Join in heaven's unceasing prayer,
Mine as certainly, though slowly,
May ascend and mingle there.

Two stanzas omitted, the Author knows where, but not to be inserted till he knows how.

Teach me so Thy works to read
  That my faith,—new strength accruing,—
May from world to world proceed,
  Wisdom's fruitful search pursuing;
  Till, thy truth my mind imbuing,
I proclaim the Eternal Creed,
  Oft the glorious theme renewing
God our Lord is God indeed.

Give me love aright to trace
  Thine to everything created,
Preaching to a ransomed race
  By Thy mercy renovated,
  Till with all thy fulness sated
I behold thee face to face
  And with Ardour unabated
Sing the glories of thy grace.

WILL YOU COME ALONG WITH ME?

Will you come along with me,
  In the fresh spring-tide,
My comforter to be
  Through the world so wide?
Will you come and learn the ways
A student spends his days,
On the bonny, bonny braes
  Of our ain burnside?

For the lambs will soon be here,
  In the fresh spring-tide;
As lambs come every year
  On our ain burnside.
Poor things, they will not stay,
But we will keep the day
When first we saw them play
  On our ain burnside.

We will watch the budding trees
  In the fresh spring-tide,
While the murmurs of the breeze
  Through the branches glide.
Where the mavis builds her nest,
And finds both work and rest,
In the bush she loves the best,
  On our ain burnside.

And the life we then shall lead
In the fresh spring-tide,
Will make thee mine indeed,
Though the world be wide.
No stranger's blame or praise
Shall turn us from the ways
That brought us happy days
On our ain burnside.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION, 1874.

NOTES OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

In the very beginnings of science, the parsons, who managed things then,
Being handy with hammer and chisel, made gods in the likeness of men;
Till Commerce arose, and at length some men of exceptional power
Supplanted both demons and gods by the atoms, which last to this hour.
Yet they did not abolish the gods, but they sent them well out of the way,
With the rarest of nectar to drink, and blue fields of nothing to sway.
From nothing comes nothing, they told us, nought happens by chance, but by fate;
There is nothing but atoms and void, all else is mere whims out of date.
Then why should a man curry favour with beings who cannot exist,
To compass some petty promotion in nebulous kingdoms of mist?
But not by the rays of the sun, nor the glittering shafts of the day,
Must the fear of the gods be dispelled, but by words, and their wonderful play.
So treading a path all untrod, the poet-philosopher sings
Of the seeds of the mighty world—the first beginnings of things;
How freely he scatters his atoms before the beginning of years;
How he clothes them with force as a garment, those small incompressible spheres.
Nor yet does he leave them hard-hearted—he dowers them with love and with hate,
Like spherical small British Asses in infinitesimal state;
Till just as that living Plato, whom foreigners nickname Plateau,
Drops oil in his whisky-and-water (for foreigners sweeten it so),
Each drop keeps apart from the other, enclosed in a flexible skin,
Till touched by the gentle emotion evolved by the prick of a pin:
Thus in atoms a simple collision excites a sensational thrill,
Evolved through all sorts of emotion, as sense, understanding, and will;

(For by laying their heads all together, the atoms, as councillors do,
May combine to express an opinion to every one of them new.)
There is nobody here, I should say, has felt true indignation at all,
Till an indignation meeting is held in the Ulster Hall ;
Then gathers the wave of emotion, then noble feelings arise,
Till you all pass a resolution which takes every man by surprise.
Thus the pure elementary atom, the unit of mass and of thought,
By force of mere juxtaposition to life and sensation is brought ;
So, down through untold generations, transmission of structureless germs
Enables our race to inherit the thoughts of beasts, fishes, and worms.
We honour our fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers too ;
But how shall we honour the vista of ancestors now in our view?
First, then, let us honour the atom, so lively, so wise, and so small ;
The atomists next let us praise, Epicurus, Lucretius, and all ;
Let us damn with faint praise Bishop Butler, in whom many atoms combined
To form that remarkable structure, it pleased him to call his mind.
Last, praise we the noble body to which, for the time we belong,
Ere yet the swift whirl of the atoms has hurried us, ruthless, along,
The British Association—like Leviathan worshipped by Hobbes,
The incarnation of wisdom, built up of our witless nobs,
Which will carry on endless discussions, when I, and probably you,
Have melted in infinite azure—in English, till all is blue.

THE VAMPYRE.

Thair is a knichte rydis through the wood,
And a douchty knichte is hee,
And sure he is on a message sent,
He rydis sae hastilie.
Hee passit the aik, and hee passit the birk,
And hee passit monie a tre,
Bot plesant to him was the saugh sae slim,
For beneath it hee did see
The boniest ladie that ever he saw,
Scho was sae schyn and fair.
And there scho sat, beneath the saugh,
Kaiming hir gowden hair.
And then the knicht—"Oh ladye brichte,
What chance hes broucht you here,
But say the word, and ye schall gang
Back to your kindred dear."
Then up and spok the ladye fair—
"I have nae friends or kin,

Bot in a littel boat I live,
  Amidst the waves' loud din."
Then answered thus the douchty knichte—
  "I'll follow you through all,
For gin ye bee in a littel boat,
  The world to it seemis small."
They gaed through the wood, and through the wood,
  To the end of the wood they came:
And when they came to the end of the wood
  They saw the salt sea faem.
And then they saw the wee, wee boat,
  That daunced on the top of the wave,
And first got in the ladye fair,
  And then the knicht sae brave;
They got into the wee, wee boat,
  And rowed wi' a' their micht;
When the knichte sae brave, he turnit aboot,
  And lookit at the ladye brichte;
He lookit at her bonie cheik,
  And hee lookit at her twa brichte eyne,
Bot hir rosie cheik growe ghaistly pale,
  And scho seymit as scho deid had been.
The fause, fause knichte growe pale wi' frichte,
  And his hair rose up on end,
For gane-by day cam to his mynde,
  And his former luve he kenned.
Then spake the ladye,—"Thou, fause knichte,
  Hast done to mee much ill,
Thou didst forsake me long ago,
  Bot I am constant still;
For though I ligg in the woods sae cauld
  At rest I canna bee
Until I sucke the gude lyfe blude
  Of the man that gart me dee."
Hee saw hir lipps were wet wi' blude,
  And hee saw hir lyfelesse eyne,
And loud hee cry'd, "Get frae my syde,
  Thou vampyr corps uncleane!"
Bot no, hee is in hir magic boat,
  And on the wyde, wyde sea;
And the vampyr suckis his gude lyfe blude
  Sho suckis him till hee dee.
So now beware, whoe're you are,
  That walkis in this lone wood;
Beware of that deceitful spright,
  The ghaist that suckis the blude.

RECOLLECTIONS OF DREAMLAND.

Rouse ye! torpid daylight-dreamers, cast your carking cares away
As calm air to troubled water, so my night is to your day;

All the dreary day you labour, groping after common sense,
And your eyes ye will not open on the night's magnificence.
Ye would scoff were I to tell you how a guiding radiance gleams
On the outer world of action from my inner world of dreams.

When, with mind released from study, late I lay me down to sleep,
From the midst of facts and figures, into boundless space I leap ;
For the inner world grows wider as the outer disappears,
And the soul retiring inward, finds itself beyond the spheres.
Then, to this unbroken sameness, some fantastic dream succeeds,
Vague emotions rise and ripen into thoughts and words and deeds,
Old impressions, long forgotten, range themselves in Time and Space,
Till I recollect the features of some once familiar place.
Then from valley into valley in my dreaming course I roam,
Till the wanderings of my fancy end, where they began, at home.

Calm it lies in morning twilight, while each streamlet far and wide
Still retains its hazy mantle, borrowed from the mountain's side ;
Every knoll is now an island, every wooded bank a shore,
To the lake of quiet vapour that has spread the valley o'er.
Sheep are couched on every hillock, waiting till the morning dawns,
Hares are on their early rambles, limping o'er the dewy lawns.
All within the house is silent, darkened all the chambers seem,
As with noiseless step I enter, gliding onwards in my dream.

What, has Time run out his cycle, do the years return again ?
Are there treasure-caves in Dreamland where departed days remain ?
I have leapt the bars of distance—left the life that late I led—
I remember years and labours as a tale that I have read ;
Yet my heart is hot within me, for I feel the gentle power
Of the spirits that still love me, waiting for this sacred hour.
Yes,—I know the forms that meet me are but phantoms of the brain,
For they walk in mortal bodies, and they have not ceased from pain.
Oh, these signs of human weakness, left behind for ever now,
Dearer far to me than glories round a fancied seraph's brow.
Oh, the old familiar voices. Oh, the patient waiting eyes,
Let me live with them in dreamland, while the world in slumber lies ;
For by bonds of sacred honour will they guard my soul in sleep
From the spells of aimless fancies, that around my senses creep.
They will link the past and present into one continuous life,
While I feel their hope, their patience, nerve me for the daily strife.

For it is not all a fancy that our lives and theirs are one,
And we know that all we see is but an endless work begun.
Part is left in Nature's keeping, part is entered into rest,
Part remains to grow and ripen, hidden in some living breast.
What is ours we know not, either when we wake or when we sleep,
But we know that Love and Honour, day and night, are ours to keep.

What though Dreams be wandering fancies, by some lawless force entwined,
Empty bubbles, floating upwards through the current of the mind?
There are powers and thoughts within us, that we know not, till they rise
Through the stream of conscious action from where Self in secret lies.
But when Will and Sense are silent, by the thoughts that come and go,
We may trace the rocks and eddies in the hidden depths below.

Let me dream my dream till morning, let my mind run slow and clear,
Free from all the world's distraction, feeling that the Dead are near,
Let me wake, and see my duty lie before me straight and plain.
Let me rise refreshed, and ready to begin my work again.

JANE H. C. FORD

WAS born at Leith in 1852, and died at North Berwick in 1876. She wrote poems of much promise even in her twelfth year, and considering the early age at which the following specimens of her Muse were produced, we think there are few who will not admit that, had she lived, she might have attained a high place among the singers of our land. In 1879 a neat little volume, entitled "Mara: A Girl's Story, and Other Poems," was printed for private circulation. This book contains a number of

her pieces that were not composed with the most remote intention of publication, and a lovingly-written memoir, from which we gather the following facts of a short, quiet, and uneventful life. When about five years of age it was found that her spine was giving way, and she had to lie constantly on her back either on a sofa or in her perambulator. She was to carry this weary burden of infirmity to the end. The enforced seclusion was spent pouring over books, and although debarred from the joy and activity of life and motion, she was ever cheerful and resigned. At the age of thirteen, she, with a much loved younger sister, who was her steady companion, went to a lady's school. Her teacher says—"How well I remember her coming to us for the first time with her father, who wished to try the experiment of school life for her, but was afraid that amongst so many other girls she might feel her infirmity more painful. We thought so too, but little knew what a brave heart, and what a clear and refined mind lived in that weak, little body." She soon distinguished herself in her classes, and became remarkable for the ease and elegance with which she expressed herself in her mother-tongue, and her teacher remarked that she had seldom had so intelligent, so studious, and so gifted a pupil. She had a special aptitude for languages, and could repeat French, German, or Italian poetry with an accent so pure that she seemed to have caught it instinctively with the thoughts of the poets.

Her family generally spent the summer months at North Berwick, and this change from town to country always brought great enjoyment to the subject of our sketch. Here, in her own feeble way, she could move about—the bright, clear air, the fresh green fields, the ever changeful moods of the sea, filled her with a rapturous delight. A few years passed quietly on in even tenor, till she was called to mourn

the death of her sister and mother—to her a lost great beyond measure,—the mother to whom she had been such a care, who had wrapped her round with such fond, solicitous affection. Soon after this she grew perceptibly weaker, and gradually became entirely prostrated. All that fondest affection and medical skill could do was done. Her father's care over her had always been very tender, and now little else filled his thoughts. Her mind continued to be calm, and full of eager and joyous anticipation. She spoke always as if her sickness was unto death, and to her dying was only going home. Day by day she faded till the end came. She left this world when the roses that she loved so well went out, and much that was tender and true, gracious, lovable, and kindly went out with her. The selection we give is the evident expression of a pure soul, chastened by suffering. As might be expected, purity of thought and grace of diction are characteristics of her Muse. Considerable depth and sweetness of fancy, rhythm and imagination reveal both her poetical character and her religious feelings.

THE CLOUDS.

Clouds, restless clouds,
How they go drifting, drifting,
Hurrying hence ;
Ceaselessly shifting, shifting,
Whither and whence ?
Wrathful the gathering piles are glooming,
Leaden and dense ;
Tempest-driven, with menace looming,
Seem they a world to ruin dooming.
Clouds, storm-tossed clouds.

Clouds, dawn-flushed clouds,
Heaped high in rippling masses,
And shining bars ;
Their flame-like glory passes
O'er slumbering stars.
Bright armies, grand defiance breathing
To royal Mars ;

White sea-birds, their swift wings unsheathing,
The trailing purple curves are wreathing,
Clouds, morning clouds.

Clouds, summer clouds,
Veiling, and yet revealing
The sunbeams' play ;
Heaven's azure softly stealing
Through feathery grey ;
Shadow-waves floating white and mazy,
Day after day ;
Tranced in a calm of languor lazy,
Bathed in a radiance golden-hazy,
Clouds, sun-steeped clouds.

Clouds, changeful clouds,
Mingle phantastic dragons,
Monster, and hill,
Weird phantoms, fairy wagons ;
Man's vaunted skill
Forces the air, earth, fire and water,
To work his will ;
Freedom herself—he's chained and caught her,
Ne'er shall he thrall her white-winged daughter,
The wayward cloud.

Clouds, sunset clouds,
Gracefully sailing, sailing
Into the west ;
Mellowing, softening, paling,
Now cometh rest.
Why must such loveliness grow dimmer,
Dreamlike at best ?
Words may not tell that dazzling glimmer,
Glowing with tender rosy shimmer,
Clouds, amber clouds.

Clouds, midnight clouds,
Mutely the stars are listening
To hear, may be,
What murmureth 'neath their glistening,—
The voiceful sea.
When from these fleecy arms, pale streaming,
The moon gets free,
Faintly the silvered depths are gleaming,
Shadowy, silent, stilly dreaming,
Clouds, sleeping clouds.

A SAD PARTING.

I dreed a weary dree yestreen,
An' oh, this heart it grew fu' wae !

I lookit lang in twa dark een
I'll see nae mair for mony a day.

I lookit lang, I lookit sair,
An' aye my heart it grew mair wae ;
His bonny een they shone sae fair,
I couldna turn my ain away.

A thousand times we spak' fareweel ;
But oh, to pairt, our hearts were wae !
A thousand times we kiss'd atweel,
Yet couldna tear oorsels away.

. . . .

Will after nichts seem aye sae lang,
An' maun this heart be aye sae wae ?
I'm weary o' the wee birds' sang,
I'm weary o' the licht o' day.

What though blythe simmer blooms sae sweet,
An' westlin' win's blaw saftly tae ?
I canna spin, I daurna greet,
An' oh, my heart, my heart is wae !

SUNSET ON THE SEA.

O happy, happy sea !
What marvel if the fairness of thy face
Bewitched the dying sun ? that wondrous grace,
That winsome witchery,
Hath lured him down to lose in one long kiss,
The waning life that findeth no love's bliss.

O happy, happy sea !
As from a dream thy slumbering heart awoke,
And blossomed into glory ; and there broke
A laughing ecstasy,
A golden glory all about the place,
As though that kiss had won thee heaven's own grace.

O happy, happy sea,
Whose beauty weareth the divine impress !
This gleam of the celestial blessedness
Oft groweth unto me
A shining pathway, mystic, consecrate,
Whereby the soul may reach heaven's very gate.

Oh happy, happy sea,
There is a glancing of immortal light,

A subtle flashing like a falling flight of stars,
A lovely mystery
Of motion, tremulous with living flame,
Till rainbows, as they watch grow wan with shame.

O happy, happy sea,
The rosy-footed clouds draw, eager, nigh
To view thy rare effulgence; until they sigh,
Half sad, to find they lie
Beside this lustrous sheen so faintly fair,
And catch a warmer radiance dreaming there.

O happy, happy sea,
All quivering with luminous delight!
This gleaming wonder, matchless in the might
Of perfect harmony,
Lies shimmering athwart thy heaving blue
Like some fair fancy glorified anew.

A WAEFU' HEART IS ILL BYDE.

The wintry blast cam' snell owre the snaw;
Oh, a waefu' heart is ill to byde!
Yet aye the lowe it wad loup an' fa',
An' dance its en'less dance on the wa';
For the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde.

I' the gloamin's hush she sate her lane;
Oh, a waefu' heart is ill to byde!
An' hers was as cauld as ony stane,
Yet she spak' nae word, but tholed the pain:
An' the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde.

Lang dule had dimmed her beautie rare;
For a waefu' heart is ill to byde!
An' oh! but hers, I wot it was sair,
Yet that sweet wan face it wad aye be fair,
An' the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde.

The saut, saut tears frae her een wad steal;
Oh, a waefu' heart is ill to byde!
An' whiles she wad saftly croon, atweel,
Some plaintive sang *he* had ance lo'ed weel;
But the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde.

His bairn, puir wean! it lay on her knee;
Oh, a waefu' heart is ill to byde!
"Come back to thy helpless babe an' me!
Oh, true heart," she cried, "why didst thou dee?
For the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde.

Thou liest fu' mony a fathom deep,
  Ay, a waefu' heart is ill to byde !
An' oh, gin we twa micht near thee creep,
Thegither we'd sleep death's quiet sleep,
  For the warl' gangs on whate'er betyde."

CAN THE BIRDS BE SINGING TO ME.

Can the birds be singing to me, to me,
  From out the spring-kissed woods ?
    Their song is so glad,
    And I am so sad ;
But if they be singing to me, to me,
    With their shy surprise,
    And their soft bright eyes,
  What means such joyous mood ?

Oh, can they be singing of life, of life,
  Its ceaseless vague unrest ?
    Their song is so glad,
    And life is so sad ;
Nay, had they been singing of life, of life,
    Its burden of blame,
    Sense of loss and shame,
  Their strains had been less blest.

Perchance they are singing of love, of love.
  Ah me ! I cannot tell.
    Their song is all glad,
    And love is half sad ;
But if they be singing of love, of love,
    Birds must love lightly,
    Daintily, brightly,
  Wisely, and not too well.

Or can they be singing of death, of death,
  The end of all sweetness here ?
    Their song is so glad,
    And death is so sad ;
Ah, if they were singing of death, of death,
    Coming dark and chill,
    All this joy to still,
  Could their notes be so gaily clear ?

Methinks they are singing to God, to God,
  They scarce know what, nor why ;
    He has made them glad,
    Can their song be sad ?
And so they keep singing to God, to God,
    These, their sweet wild lays
    Of unconscious praise.
  Birds, ye do more than I !

OH! HUMAN LOVE.

Oh ! human love, how tender sweet thou art,
And yet how strong ;
When thou hast taken captive head and heart,
What way seems long ?
Thy patience findeth nought too hard to bear,
Thy courage knoweth nought it would not dare.

This is the royal gift wherewith heaven's King
Hath crownëd man.
No gift or grace such blessedness can bring
As loving can ;
For self is slain by love, and from its grave
The love-freed soul comes forth, no more self's slave.

The human leadeth up like easy stairs
To the divine ;
Until our faltering human love e'en dares
To reach to Thine—
To Thine, love-perfect Christ ! who only art
The refuge of the world's love-hungering heart.

That world forgets her heritage of woe,
Remembering love,
For love is heaven, and shadows forth below
The joy above ;
O mystery ! that God should let us climb
So gently to eternity by time.

REV. JAMES MILLIGAN, D.D.

THE Rev. James Milligan, D.D., was born in the village of Ecclefechan, famous as the birthplace of Thomas Carlyle. He attended the Parish School there, and exhibited at a very early age a taste for literature and poetry. The poems of Burns and the "Mountain Bard" and "Forest Minstrel" of Hogg were his daily companions. There, too, he first met with the works of Carlyle, (presentation copies to the village library, and bearing his autograph)

and doubtless a perusal of those weird and fascinating writings marked an epoch in his mental and spiritual history. After leaving the village school he accepted a situation in Yorkshire. Being within six miles of Bradford he got books from one of the libraries in that town, and for two years spent all his spare time in constant study of the great masterpieces of English literature. The works of Shakespeare and Spenser among the ancients, and of Godwin, Sheridan, Shelley, Byron, Poe, and Moore among the moderns, and a host of other imaginative writers, were read, annotated, and committed to memory, with a perseverance and an ardour rarely manifested—the result being that Dr Milligan has a knowledge of English Literature, and especially of our poets, which few have surpassed. Even from the more obscure tenants of our British Parnassus he has extracted whatever is of the essence of poetry, and can give on the spur of the moment long quotations from authors entirely unknown to ordinary students. At this period he made a special study of Tennyson and Browning, and doubtless, like all young poets,

> "Was o'erpowered
> By Nature, by the turbulence subdued
> Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,
> And the first virgin passion of a soul
> Communing with the glorious universe."

In 1856 our poet and an old schoolfellow met together, and after a discussion of their mutual prospects agreed to emigrate to Canada, and there seek a career for themselves. He attended classes in the University of Toronto, and afterwards entered the Divinity Hall of the U.P. Church in Canada.

At Toronto he began to write poetry in earnest, and sent his productions home from time to time to the *Dumfries Standard*. On being settled in a Canadian charge he began to experiment in blank

verse, choosing for his subject the closing scenes in the life of King Saul. In pastoral visitations and silent communings with nature in the solitudes of the Canadian forests, his poetic genius was matured, and he began the "Village Sketches"—a poem which we trust will yet be given in its entirety to the world; but being unsatisfied with his work, he laid it aside for several years. After a period of devoted labour in Canada his health gave way, and in 1868 he was compelled to return to Scotland. When somewhat recruited he resumed ministerial work in the quaint and picturesque little town of Houghton-le-Spring, in the county of Durham. Here he resumed his "Village Sketches," his longest composition. These pictures of village life are, to a certain extent, autobiographical, recording the growth of the poet's mind as he wandered amid the beautiful pastoral scenery of his native country, entered into the humours of village life, and came into daily contact with the homely and sometimes grotesque characters of village society. In these "sketches" we have the very spirit and essence of true poetry. They contain a transcript of life and nature which bears all the marks of reality.

Dr Milligan is a true singer, and his heart has been, as it were, an alembic, in which have been melted down impressions derived from solitary wanderings by the rivers of his Fatherland, and in the primeval forests of the New World, the passion and rapture of young affection, the glowing ambitions of a young heart, the riddles of the old Sphinx Nature, so stimulative of thought, and so insoluble; and the spiritual essence of the resultant is a new creation—the product of a mind which has gazed directly upon Nature, and not merely through "the spectacles of books." In Dr Milligan's poems we have thus a *voice*, and not an *echo*.

There was a time when all priests and prophets

were bards, and the names of Crabbe, Young, Croly, Grahame, and Pollok, and numerous bright examples in this work prove that the conjunction of Divine and Poet is not rare. Dr Milligan is not only a poetical divine, but he is a model clergyman. He has gathered round him in Houghton a congregation of intelligent men and women, and it is asserted that from few pulpits are heard more thoughtful, finished, and eloquent discourses than those which are delivered to the Presbyterians of Houghton by their poet-preacher. He writes most chaste, polished, and concise English prose; is a brilliant conversationalist; and the few who are admitted to his intimacy retain vivid memories of seasons when they have heard him throwing off racy and humorous reflections upon men and manners, satirising current follies, or, in higher moods, dwelling upon the mysteries amid which we walk. He entertains strong views upon social, political, and eccesiastical themes; but the mellow light of poetry is poured over them all, and, like most of the Singing Brotherhood, he has an indestructible faith in Humanity, and looks forward to the future and its developments without fear.

THE VILLAGE SMITHY.

Back from the streets, a dozen steps or so,
The village smithy stood, with carts and ploughs
Around the door, and patient horses tied
To iron rings. A jolly place it was
O' winter nights, when hinds and farmers' sons
Dropt in with broken gear. What stories then
'Bout *kemps in har'st*, or idle feats of strength
Done in the mere bravado of the hour;
What ringing laughter at the quick retort,
What innocent banter, what bucolic wit
I've heard, admiring from my favourite perch
Upon the smithy hearth. The smith, a man
Swart as an Ethiop. Not Hercules
Possessed more ample shoulders, nor a frame
With fairer show of strength. A bony arm—
And such an arm! The iron muscles lay
Like stubborn ridges 'long the dusky limb;

A hand of knotted strength, and breast laid bare,
And rough as Esau's ; two keen-piercing eyes,
Deep set within his head, that sparkling shone
Beneath dark, shaggy eyebrows, like twin stars
From under murky clouds. I see him stand,
With all his strength at rest, before the forge,
In leathern apron clad, or patient ply
The roaring bellows, swaying to and fro
With regulated motion. What a light
Fell on the dingy rafters as he took
The glowing bar, and, 'mid a shower of sparks,
Beat out the Mars with quick repeated blows,
Till on his tawny brow the sweat stood out
Like beads of jet ; then in an old stone trough
He'd plunge the iron, hissing hot, and lo !
Evolving clouds of vapour instant rose,
And eddying rolled along the dusky roof.

DEATH.

Death ! can I e'er forget the day when first
I heard the tearful whisper of thy name ?
An aged man who dwelt next door had died,
And all the neighbours walked with softer tread,
And wore a look of sorrow, as they spoke,
Low voiced, to one another. Unobserved,
A curious child, I crept into the room—
A large, bare room—and saw the humble bed,
With snow-white linen deck'd, that gave to view
The faintest outline of a human form,
And a white face,—that face is with me now,
Swept of all passion, lying there as still
As the cold surface of a pool in frost.
But what a power was in that dead man's face,
To keep me gazing on it with an awe
That scarce permitted my young heart to beat.
No mark of suffering ; no anxiety ;
No care ; no fear of the to-morrow there—
Nought but the white face in a marble calm,
Upturn'd to Heaven, as if done with earth,
And eyelids closed upon the world for aye.

THE LARK.

Thrice happy time ! when 'mong the golden broom
I wandered careless as the aimless winds,
Or sat among the heather on the moor,
And watched the lark upspringing from her nest,
And, nicely poised upon her tremulous wings,
Go up the heavens with a flood of song ;
Lessening ever in the blinding sun ;
A dark spot in the sky ;—a speck—then lost

A moment, and recovered by her song,
Then lost again ; but still the music fell
Clear, ringing from the clouds : and still I gazed
After the viewless singer, knowing well
Her nest would draw her to the earth again ;
Till, from the azure depths of fervid day,
The wanderer floated back into my ken,
A speck in the deep blue, and then a blot
Upon the snowy fringes of a cloud ;
Descending ever, till, her music ceased,
She, with the fevered beat of amorous wings,
Dropt like a stone amid the purple blooms.

THE BLIND MUSICIAN.

Robin, the blind musician ! one well known
At balls and bridal feasts. His violin
His sole delight ; and what a touch was his ;
For in his hand the instrument became
A fount of melody. It seemed as if
His soul were in its strings. The plaint of grief ;
The shout of mirth ; the cry of bird or beast ;
The tempest crashing through the winter woods ;
The noise of summer winds ; the cheery sound
Of the brook brattling past his cottage door
He could produce at pleasure. Many a time,
Among the neighbouring farmers, on that eve
When the last sheaf of harvest is brought home,
His old Cremona, underneath an ear,
Bent lovingly, as if to catch the voice
Of some dear friend, (what friend so dear to him ?)
He drew rich music from its magic strings,
And waked the willing and responsive feet
Of happy-hearted girls and lusty youths,
With half the sun of summer in their faces,
And made grave Age forget itself, and join
The whirling dancers on the sounding floor.
But most he loved those wild and plaintive airs
That linger still in many a Scottish glen,
And who could hear, in cottage or in hall,
Our village Orpheus by the evening fire
And not confess such music had a power
Beyond all words to stir the fount of tears ?
Robin had lost his sight, not at a stroke,
But gradual, year by year, the darkness fell ;
And year by year the landscape looked more strange ;
And year by year the faces of his friends
Kept slowly fading in the gathering night
That came at last between him and the sun
So rayless, that he only *felt* the day.
He dwelt alone, his life, serenely calm ;

Careful, but not penurious, he had saved
What bought the cottage, where for twenty years
He lived, and where in middle life he died ;
A sadness took possession of all hearts,
When it was whispered that our Orpheus
Had passed away.
It was a summer eve,
And through the casement streamed the ruddy light
Of the declining sun, and slowly crept
Across the floor, and o'er the coverlet,
Until the cold face of the dying man
Lay in the warm effulgence ; then we saw
The end was near ; the end of that long night
No morn of ours could gild. He turned his head,
And, raising clasped hand to Heaven, he cried,
"No more of darkness ! In the eventide
'Tis light ;" and smiling, as if he beheld
The unutterable glory, passed away.

THE MAIL COACH.

Even now I see
The busy post-house, where the *Royal Mail*
Changed its four reeking steeds each day at noon.
How vivid I recall that noonday scene ;
The buxom landlady in curls and smiles ;
The hunch-back hostler, busy as a bee ;
The jovial driver, of such portly size
That, when he mounted to his seat, the coach
Rock'd like a ship at sea ; and perched behind
Upon a semi-circular seat, the guard,
In scarlet coat, with face as fiery red
As sun at setting ; the clear ring of hoofs ;
The roll of wheels ; the schoolboys' loud huzzas,
As down the street, amid a cloud of dust,
Rattled the *Royal Mail*.

THE VILLAGE CHURCH-YARD.

The village church-yard ; let me lightly tread
Among its quiet sleepers. How the place
Is ridged with graves. So thick the tombstones stand,
You scarce can see between. All sizes they—
From the low stone no higher than the grass,
That bears the initials of some name unknown,
To the tall monument that blazons forth
The name, the titles, and the virtuous deeds
Of him that lies below. A motley throng
Here rest ; their earthly cares now at an end ;

Their smiles and tears ; their sorrows and their joys ;
Their loves, their hates ; their pleasures and their pains
All ended here. None murmur at their lot ;
No jarring heard in this great company.
Whatever difference marked them when they lived
The hand of death has rudely sundered now ;
The pauper, eager for his weekly dole,
Dealt by the hand of blessed Charity ;
The peasant, and the master whom he served ;
The purse-proud merchant, and the country squire
Have found a common level in these graves.
The miser, and the man of open hand ;
He who ne'er felt for misery, and he
Who ne'er beheld it but to drop a tear ;
The diligent, whose hand had gathered wealth ;
The spendthrift, who had died in poverty ;
The irreverent sinner ; the consistent saint ;
Fresh, blooming youth, and wrinkled, toothless age,
All lie beneath these hillocks ; all at rest,
And the blue heavens bending over all.
Ye silent dead, methinks ye teach me more
Than all the living ; for 'tis here I see
Ambition's end. O, ye aspiring souls,
Ye who have clomb to the cold, perilous heights,
Reached only by a few, when death shall strike
You in your pride of place, then tell me where,
Where will you leave your glory ? Ye dead kings
Who darkly schemed to reach the crowns ye wore,
Say, was it worth the disregard of truth,
The violation of a brother's right ;
And all the toil that by a tortuous way
Upled you to the dazzling pinnacle,
And drew upon you for a transient hour
A nation's gaze ? Could mighty Cæsar speak
And that mad Macedonian, who held
Within his grasp the sceptres of the world,
And that impetuous Swede that filled the North
With the loud din of all-devouring war,
And he who led the flower of Galia's sons
To many a barren victory, and left
Their bones to whiten amid Boreal snows—
Could they but break the silence of the grave,
They'd read a wholesome lesson to the world,
And tell us that one kindly act outworths
The costliest crown, and that he buys too dear
A kingdom's sceptre, if the price he pays
Gives to his conscience but a single pang
When dying. Ah ! methinks a soverign care
For mad ambition is to meditate
A few brief moments in a place like this.

SWEET TO THE WATCHER, WATCHING FOR THE DAY.

Sweet to the watcher, watching for the day,
The morning light that slowly fills the sky ;
Sweet to the Arab on his toilsome way,
The feathery palm that speaks the fountain nigh :
And sweet is slumber to the weary eye ;
But sweeter far to him long doomed to roam
In foreign lands, when first he can descry,
From the dull deck above the ocean foam,
The glittering cliffs arise that faithful guard his home.

Hail, Scotia, hail ; thrice happy is the lot
Of those who here in sweet contentment dwell,
Secure from want, from luxury remote ;
Well pleased from youth to age to hear and tell
Thy touching annals in their native dell :
Not forced by fate, or love of larger gains,
To take of thee and theirs a long farewell,
And seek a home far from thy sacred fanes,
On bleak Canadian shores, or wide Australian plains.

Mine it has been to roam in many a land
That boasts of balmier air and brighter skies,
Where mighty rivers roll, and lakes expand
To inland seas, and lofty forests rise,
And birds in plumage of all brilliant dyes
Outshine the sober songsters of thy groves ;
But never ; never on my raptured eyes
Rose scene like this—grey mountains, friths, and coves,
All that inspire the soul, and all the poet loves.

How rich the landscape, the expansive vale,
The lake, the river, and the tinkling rill ;
The flashing sea, the solitary sail,
Yon ruined watch-tower on the distant hill—
The wide woods lying round it calm and still,
The lordly mansion that arrests the eye,
The white flocks straying at their own sweet will,
With scattered villages that peaceful lie,
And far-off mountain tops that melt into the sky.

Morn all around me ; fresh and balmy morn ;
From yonder thicket comes the blackbird's song
In mellower notes, upon the breezes borne
Across the dewy meadow. Loud and long
Thrush answers thrush the echoing woods among,
And linnet rivals linnet in its lay ;
While high above the forest's tuneful throng,
The lark, loud singing, keeps his sunward way,
And one full chorus rings to greet the new-born day.

REV. T. BOSTON JOHNSTONE.

THE subject of our present sketch is the author of several important theological works, and a brilliant lecturer on patriotic and other subjects. He was born at Limekilns, Dunfermline, in 1846. His father was the *medical* doctor, and his uncle, the well-known Dr William Johnstone, was the ministerial doctor of the village. The one practised and the other preached. Mr Johnstone was educated at the village school, and at the University of St Andrews. After going through the usual curriculum in the U.P. Theological Hall, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and ordained in Colinsburgh, Fifeshire, in 1871. In 1875 he was inducted in 'Pleasance U.P. Church, Edinburgh, and in 1882 our poet was placed over his present charge—St Andrews Presbyterian Church of England, Bolton.

When a probationer, Mr Johnstone wrote descriptive letters to the Dunfermline press on "Orkney," "Findochty," "London," "The English Lakes," and other places that he had visited during his "wanderings" as a preacher. He recently published a small work of much national interest on the subject of "Scotland: its Motto and its People," the substance of which was originally delivered in an address to the Bolton Burns Club. Another pleasant little work recently issued by our author is "How we Spent our Summer Holiday in Norway; or, Sights and Scenes in Norseland." These are published by Mr Winterburn, Bolton. Mr Johnstone has also written several valuable and popular handbooks for students, including "The Harmony of the Gospel," "The Gospel in Italy," "The Church in Russia," "Analysis of Genesis, Joshua, Judges, Ezra, Nehemiah," &c. (London: John Heywood).

Now-a-days, it is only occasionally that Mr Johnstone finds time to cultivate the Muse; but we have before us a small book entitled "Poems on the Grave of the Bruce," being three poems which Professor Mason decided to be the first in point of merit among those competing for Sir Noel Paton's Prize, offered in 1867 to the members of the "Edinburgh Dunfermline Literary Society." The eminent painter—Her Majesty's Limner for Scotland, noticed in our second series—was Honorary President of the Society. There were twenty-four competitors, natives of Dunfermline and the west of Fife, and the first prize of five guineas was gained by our poet. The other two poems, nearly equal in point of merit, were published with the following. Mr Johnstone's poetry invariably shows keen patriotism, which absence from the land that inspires it has not been able to blunt. Generally speaking, his poetic imagery is vivid, and his ear delights itself with the many-toned melody of Nature.

THE GRAVE OF THE BRUCE.

Hail! old Dunfermline in the well-known shire
Of Fife—quaint "Kingdom" lying by the Forth.
All feel the glow of patriotic fire,
Who know, and can appreciate the worth
Of thy historic fame. Sons of the North,
Who glory in their country's annals bright,
Embalm thee with Edina, Stirling, Perth,
In mem'ry deep; no time shall see this sight—
Such grand old names bedimm'd by cold oblivion's night.

We mark thine Abbey's venerable walls,
And think of Malcolm and his pious Queen.
We picture thee in flames: the thought recalls
Times of foul wrong old Scotia has seen.
Wrong'd, but ne'er conquer'd has our country been.
Great mem'ries, too, thy palace old surround:
Here born was he whom Puritanic spleen
Slew! Not to England's fame did it redound.
Here, too, to keep the League, the Second Charles was bound.

Yet not for that would I thy praises sing;
'Tis not for that thy name's for ever dear;
Thou hold'st the tomb of Scotland's greatest King,
Whose mem'ry latest ages will revere,
Who ne'er was known the face of man to fear—
A King, right kingly in his every deed.
To his last resting place we would draw near,
And with a rev'rent hand record our meed
Of praise—"Well did'st thou, Bruce, in Scotland's hour of need."

What though at England's haughty court were spent,
In ease inglorious, thy early years,
When 'gainst thy country English bows were bent,
And chequer'd fortune fell to Scottish spears,
A word from Wallace sounded in thy ears,
And then thy life in Freedom's cause began.
The eloquence of thy poor country's tears
Thee conquer'd. When to lead old Scotland's van
The hour once more had come—then, too, had come *the man.*

Farewell to England then; the die is cast;
Scotland and Freedom have not called in vain.
Great Wallace meet Successor finds at last,
Destined our independence to regain.
To quit our soil the Southron shall be fain.
Quake, Tyranny, the Bruce is in the field,
Our cherished birthright—Freedom—to maintain.
Soon shall Oppression's doom be justly sealed,
And soon proud Edward know that Scotland ne'er can yield.

But, as the gloom is deepest just before
The rosy morn trips o'er the eastern hills,
So, in dark days, and times of trouble sore,
Did thy career—which Scottish hearts still thrills,
And love of the old "mountain land" instills—
Begin. Nor *Lia Fail*, nor robes, nor crown;
The story of thy coronation fills
Scant space in history; but thy renown
Is greater, that thus low thy fortunes had gone down.

A King once more in Scotland! Quick the word
To England flies, and rouses Edward's ire.
Again that warrior buckles on his sword,
And vows 'gainst Scotland vengeance, deep and dire.
Old and infirm, but nerved by the old fire,
His host he marshals at Carlisle; but, lo!
The son must lead the squadrons of the sire,
Who now meets other than a Scottish foe—
The Conqueror of Kings has laid *the Hammer* low.

And well for Scotland. Back the force is led,
With neither gain nor glory for their pains.
England has lost at once her *hand and head.*
Arise, O Bruce'! strike off thy country's chains;
The hour has struck to wipe out Slavery's stains.
Then gird thee for the work, the Southron still
Possession of our fortresses retains.
"War to the knife" the watchword be, until
The Scottish standard floats o'er every Scottish hill.

This giant task engaged thee for six years,
Edward and Douglas, thy co-partners true,
Sharing thy toils and dangers, hopes and fears;
Good soldiers both, Scots of the proper hue—
To whose exploits we pay the tribute due,
Renown in arms. The great task nears its close,
The castles are regained all Scotland through;
But see! England prepares her fatal bows
To crush, by one great stroke, her restless Scottish foes.

They come, they come, a hundred thousand strong,
And Scotland girds her for the awful fight.
His army, small but tried, Bruce posts along
The Bannock's stream, which served to guard his right;
While pits turfed over to deceive the sight,
Secured the left; the front was marshy ground.
The Scots are ready. Come in all thy might,
Proud England, for the onset give the sound,
Bruce, Randolph, Douglas, all shall at their posts be found.

The trumpets sound the charge, and to the shock
The English horse advance spurred to full speed,
But break on Scottish spears like wave on rock;
And as they madden'd reel, see Randolph lead
His fiery squadrons to the charge. No deed
Too daring for this soldier dashing, bold.
Lo, there five hundred chosen horse succeed
Against ten thousand archers mass'd—be told
Once and again the tale—such feats can ne'er grow old.

Now fierce and deadly grows the mighty fray,
The wail of battle fills the summer air;
But, hark! that Scottish shout, "They fail," the day
Is turned. Now for a vict'ry past compare,
Now for a rout to make all England stare.
'Tis done. Thyself, O Bruce, the charge did'st head,
Surely in peace thy crown thou now may'st wear,
Since Edward from the stricken field has fled,
And left on Scottish soil his thirty thousand dead.

Proud day for Scotland ! Day that full assured
Her destiny high, and to her annals lent
A blaze of glory ; but not yet secured
Was Scotland's peace. Let England this prevent,
Good cause she'll have her folly to repent.
For years to come our arms fresh laurels win.
At length the Southron's taught to be content,
His own fair borders to remain within—
First time for thirty years is hushed grim warfare's din.

Lo ! in yon rural palace by the Clyde,
Stout-hearted lords of Scotland tearful stand ;
They have been summoned to their King's bedside
To hear from his own lips his last command—
"Lord James, most gentle knight, you know this hand
Longed to draw sword against our Saviour's foes ;
'Tis not to be ; then to the Holy Land
Take thou my heart that it may there repose.
Now shall I die in peace."—From earth his spirit goes.

The King is dead !—Throughout the land arose
A wail profound—"Alas ! now gone is he
Whose name was dreaded by our country's foes ;
His were the skill and wight that made us free.
Ay, thrice, alas ! his like we ne'er shall see."
The mighty dead they to Dunfermline bring—
His resting-place the Abbey is to be ;
Loud through the sombre aisles the dirge doth ring
As in the earth is laid the Soldier, Patriot, King.

Sleep on in peace, great Bruce. What recks it though
No lofty monument marks out thy grave ?
Memorial, which no decay shall know,
Thou findest in the Scotland thou did'st save,
While freedom's standard o'er our hills shall wave,
While June the 24th doth still return,
While in the bosom of all Scotchmen brave,
The patriotic fire holds on to burn,
Green shall the mem'ry be of Bruce of Bannockburn.

ADDRESS TO THE VIKING SHIP.

Laid up at last, your work and warfare over,
The gaze and wonder of the gaping crowd,
You once did bear the bold and hardy rover,
Ere being made his strange but fitting shroud,
O'er many a broad, tempestuous sea—
A much-prized relic of the past you'll be.

If your old timbers, now so rough and rotten,
Your good, strong keel, uplifted raking prow,

Would tell the sights you've seen, now all forgotten,
As arrows pierced thee, as bark, cut by thy bow,
Sunk headlong in the raging, foaming deep,
And bore its oarsmen to their last long sleep—

Methinks the story would not lag behind
The much-praised fables of Homeric muse;
Historians, statesmen, warriors—all would find
That Norsemen bold, in wild piratic cruise,
Proved worthy sires of modern British braves—
Of those who now are said to "rule the waves."

A thousand years you have lain buried there,
Guarding the dust of some great Viking King,
Who fought with Harold of the golden hair,
With Swedish Jarl or with Danish Svein.
Perhaps you've sailed up Almond and up Tay,
And cast your anchor on the shores of May.

But when you sailed down rocky Angus shore,
And bore the Norsemen to the siege of Perth,
From Luncarty they fled, defeated sore,
And hastened back to guard their native hearth,
Then vacant seats and tattered pennons showed
How Scottish prowess Norway's ranks had mowed.

Like too, when Hakon—famous more than all—
Had conquered Arran in the Firth of Clyde,
Drawn round to Largs, he thought he would enthrall
The Pictish tribes and break the Celtic pride.
He little thought he ne'er again should see
The Fjelds and Fosses of his own country.

Are you "The Crane" who oft has terror spread
To Wales, to Dublin, to the Isle of Man?
How often have you doubled Beachy Head,
Where, only seen, both Danes and Saxons ran,
Or, consecrated to a holier use,
Convey the preachers sent by Elphegus?

Did you form one of Knut's gigantic fleet?
In triumph bear King Harold to our throne,
Was't you that English Edward went to meet,
And clasp fair Gyda, whom his love had won,
Why do you now in secret firmly keep
The story of your actions in the deep?

JOHN MURRAY MITCHELL, M.A., LL.D.

DR MURRAY MITCHELL has led a long, honoured, and busy life as a missionary, an accomplished scholar, and a writer of verse who throws over the simplest objects in Nature the sweet images of poetic fancy, and draws therefrom lessons calculated to strengthen and beautify life. He was born in Aberdeen in 1815, and after attending the the Grammar School of that city, he, at the age of fourteen, entered Marischal College. Having studied four years there, and after taking the degree of M.A., he passed through the Theological Hall of his native town, and subsequently that of Edinburgh. In 1838 he was appointed missionary of the Free Church to Bombay, and received the degree of LL.D. from Aberdeen University in 1858. He returned home in 1863, and became minister of Free East Church, Broughty Ferry. Four years afterwards Dr Mitchell was asked by the Foreign Mission Committee to go to Calcutta, where he remained about five years, when he returned home, and was appointed secretary of the Foreign Mission Committee. He resigned that office in 1878, and in 1880 went as a Scottish delegate to the General Presbyterian Council that met in Philadelphia. From America he proceeded, *via* Francisco, to Japan, and then to China and India, travelling over the latter country, seeing the missions, and acting as Secretary of the Decennial Missionary Conference in 1883. He is at present minister of the Scotch Church at Nice.

Dr Mitchell is author of a number of publications on religious subjects in Indian languages, and has also contributed largely to Indian periodicals. He has published a memoir of the Rev. Robert Nesbit, a work written for Indian students on the Evidences

of Christianity, which is in its ninth edition, and various treatises on Hinduism and other subjects. He was at one time offered the Principalship of the Government College at Poona, which post he declined, as nothing would have induced him to give up his missionary character. At a later period he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of Bombay. Dr Mitchell is a sweet singer of sacred songs, and his numerous poetical productions, contributed to newspapers and magazines both at home and abroad, entitle him to a place in this work. These are all suggestive of much spiritual insight; they are very melodious, and are calculated to touch the heart, and lead to self-communing, as well as to prove a stimulus to increased missionary effort.

VICTORY TO JESUS.

Victory to Jesus,
  Glory to His name
Who from highest Heaven
  For salvation came—
Came our souls to rescue
  From the cruel foe,
And to God and goodness
  Lead from sin and woe.
    Victory to Jesus,
      This our song shall be,
    Victory to Jesus
      Everlastingly.

We were helpless captives,
  Bound in Satan's chain;
All our heart was blighted,
  All our life was pain;
Then the King Eternal
  Saw our helpless grief,
And His son belovëd
  Gave for our relief.
    Victory to Jesus, etc.

Not the choir of angels
  Ever hymning praise,
Who, in strains exultant,
  High His glories raise:

Not the flaming splendours
Of the eternal throne
Dulled the sad low murmur
Of the captives' moan.
Victory to Jesus, etc.

Rose the Son in mercy,
Laid his honour by,
Took the sordid vesture
Of mortality :
Not the vesture only,
Took our nature true,
Son of God most mighty,
Son of Adam too.
Victory to Jesus, etc.

Call Him man of sorrows,
Fount of healing call,
King, and Priest, and Prophet,
And our all in all.
From no labour shrinking,
Which our help demands,
Lo, the cross He welcomes,
And the piercëd hands.
Victory to Jesus, etc.

Died the Lord of glory
On the shameful tree—
Died a lamb most spotless
Even for wretched me.
Yea, the world's transgression
On that cross He bore,
And his blood-bought people
Won for evermore.
Victory to Jesus, etc.

Prince of Life, the victor,
Burst death's iron band,
Calmly reascending
Up to God's right hand :
There, with power outreaching
To remotest space,
Reigneth He immortal,
Reigns in boundless grace.
Victory to Jesus, etc.

On then, Christ's own warriors,
Conquer in His might ;
Roll away the darkness,
Spread abroad His light.

Soon shall stream the radiance
To earth's farthest shore—
Glory beyond measure,
Glory evermore.
Victory to Jesus, etc., to eternity.

SORROWING, YET REJOICING.

'Midst hourly pains, and sorrows and alarms,
The assaults of Satan, and the scoffer's scorn,
One thought the bitter unto sweet transforms—
Jesus, that all my griefs for Thee are borne.

So was it with Thy martyrs Saviour dear,
Even all who kept Thy truth so pure of old;
Each pang endeared Thee to the heart; each tear
Purged the dull eye, new glory to behold.

So they who suffered most were first to greet
New sorrow, and in worst extremity
Burned brightest faith and hope; and death was sweet,
Saviour, because that death was borne for Thee.

So be it in my walk of lesser sorrow,
'Mid outward fightings, and 'mid inward fears;
Victorious Love new force from trial borrow,
And be but purified by all my tears.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Tidings, joyful tidings
To the sons of men;
Sorrow shall be banished,
Peace return again.
Long hath reigned the darkness
Starless, full of woe;
Let the songs of morning
Now begin to flow.

For the Lord hath spoken
From His lofty throne—
Nor in tones of thunder
Is His will made known;
But Jehovah speaketh
Merciful and mild,
As a loving father
Counselleth his child.

"Oh, my sheep," he crieth,
"Wanders from the fold,
Wildered on the mountains
Rugged, dark, and cold;
Oh, ye sons of Adam,
Wherefore will ye stray
Where the fell destroyer
Watcheth for the prey?

Lo, a chosen Shepherd
Do I send for you,
Sharer of my counsel,
Tender-hearted, true.
He the sheep will gather,
Shielding from alarms,
And the feeble lambkin
Shelter in His arms.

Nor is he a hireling
Careful of his ease;
When the wolf appeareth,
See, the hireling flees:
But my chosen Shepherd
Steadfast charge will keep,
And His life surrender
For the helpless sheep."

Such the wondrous promise
To the fathers given:
Jesus now fulfilleth
All the grace of Heaven;
He the wandering nations
Gathers pityingly,
Till beneath one Shepherd
All the flock shall be.

KNOW'ST THOU THE LAND.

(Translated from the German of G. H. Weigle.)

Know'st thou the land where stately oaks are seen,
Where wave by vine-clad hills the fields of green;
From leafy nooks each modest church is peeping,
And humble hearts are holy Sabbath keeping?
My childhood's land; ah, there, ah, there
Still may my spirit dwell in dreams and prayer.

Know'st thou the land where palms their pomp display,
Where glides the snake, and tigers roam for prey;
Where in dark cells grim idol shapes appear,
And darkly hovereth the death-angel near?

The heathen land ; awake, awake,
And there thy place beneath Christ's banner take.

Know'st thou the land, 'mid zones of fadeless light,
Where gleams with pearl and gold the city bright ;
Where a new song they pour in triumph high,
And every tear is wiped from every eye ?
Thy father-land ; away, away ;
Short is thy pilgrim course, yet brooketh not delay.

SONNET.

Compassion filled Thy heart and moved Thy speech,
O, loving Christ ! What time Thou didst behold
The multitude of wildered men of old,
In error sunk, with none the truth to teach—
Like sheep within the fell destroyer's reach,
Strayed from the shepherd far and the sheep fold.
Give me thy heart, O Christ, Thy love untold,
That I, like Thee, may pity—like Thee, may preach.
For round me spreads on every side a waste
Drearer than that which moved Thy soul to sadness ;
No ray has pierced this immemorial gloom ;
Nor may these hapless sons of India taste
Even a few drops of fleeting earthly gladness
As they move on slow, silent to the tomb.

JAMES DURIE

WAS born at the village of Kingskettle, Fifeshire, in 1823. He is the sixth son of a family of twelve— seven sons and five daughters. James was sent to "learn the loom" at the tender age of eleven —his father, who was a hand-loom weaver, having died the year previous. When twenty-two years of age he entered the freestone quarries, near Cupar, and served a short apprenticeship there. He continued at this occupation until seven years ago, when he was seriously injured by the falling of a crane.

Since that time he has been unable to follow his calling, and he endeavours by hard effort to earn a livelihood by soliciting orders for books, sewing machines, posting bills, and delivering circulars. He has written poetry since he was sixteen. It was at this time that, feeling the want of early education, he began manfully to improve his mind. He could hardly even read the "Primer," but a relative, a master tailor in his native village, took him by the hand; he made rapid progress, and soon proved himself to be an apt and diligent scholar. He has been a frequent contributor to the local press, and some six or eight of his tender little pieces have a place in a most entertaining volume entitled "The Poets of Clackmannanshire," by Mr Beveridge—a poet we will notice in the course of this volume. The events of daily life, and a warm love for simple Nature, afford scope for our bard's faculties. Some of his lyrics display quiet and genuine humour, while his felicitous sketches of child-life evince considerable natural sweetness and touching pathos.

OOR LITTLE JACKIE.

Saw ye e'er oor little Jackie,
Muckle-minded little man?
Heard ye e'er his manfu' crackie?
Head to heel a gentleman.

Mountit on his stool for horsie,
Like some chief o' warrior clan,
Spurrin' on to death or glory,
Fearless-hearted little man.

Ne'er a-dreamin' what's a-brewin',
Dashin' on like soger brave;
Dingin' some things on to ruin,
Strivin' hard the rest to save.

Pans an' pitchers ever rattlin',
Breakin' dishes by the score;
Then wi' wee, wee kitten prattlin',
Chackin' doggie to the door.

Lauchin' at the cockie crawin',
Fondly feedin' Jenny Wren :
Fechtin' wi' the wind a-blawin',
Carryin' bauchles to the glen.

Hurrahin' as they toss and tummle
Doon its steep and rugged sides ;
Seldom shapin' at a grummle,
While his joy he never hides.

Never oot o' childish worry,
Wi' his little mates at play ;
Ever in a hurry gurry,
Frae mornin's peep to gloamin' gray.

Aft bespatter'd to the e'e-holes,
Dashin' thro' baith dub an' mire ;
Burnin' aft his booties' wee soles
At the blazin' kitchen fire.

Shouther deep within the ashpan,
Grapplin' for his missin' bools ;
Wringin' sair his baffy wee han',
As if he'd laid them i' the mouls.

Gath'rin' bricks for biggin' castles,
Plannin' a' their toors the while ;
Breathes awhile, again he wrastles
Wi' big lumps o' broken tile.

Thrang again at stoor agattin',
Makin' mortar for the job ;
Noo, wee man, he's a' forfouchtin',
Soundly sleepin' by the hob.

Noo away to bed he's packit,
Saft the pillow's made for him ;
There he lies, the restless rackit,
Smilin' owre some childish fun.

Mammie's son, an' daddie's laddie ;
Hughie's prince, an' Jeannie's man ;
Marion's little darlin' kingie—
One in all, and all in one.

THE PRIDE O' MY E'E.

Dear, dear unto me were my visions of childhood,
When love was but dawning, and thought it was young,

And hope-giving fancy, both artful and winning,
O'er all her fair mantle of beauty had flung ;
But dearer by far than my visions of childhood,
And fairer than fancy's gay mantle to me,
Is the maid whose fond heart beats with mine true and steady—
The hope of my heart, and the pride of my e'e.

Sweet, sweet unto me is the music of summer,
When the lark is on high at the dawning of day,
Or when eve's dark'ning shadows are stealing o'er nature,
And music seems flowing from each leafy spray :
But sweeter by far than the music of summer,
And full of the riches of music to me,
Are the tones of the voice of the one I love dearly—
The hope of my heart, and the pride of my e'e.

The warrior may glory in his deeds of bold daring,
Which gain for himself and his country renown,
And the lordling may boast of his titles and treasures
Which the fair winds of fortune around him have blown ;
But none of earth's titles or treasures I covet,
Save those which are full of true honour to me,
And the one whom I love with the fondest affection—
The hope of my heart, and the pride of my e'e.

Come then, hopeful fancy, both artful and winning,
And round me thy mantle of beauty now fling,
And bathe in the sunshine of promise the future,
While I but in prospect thus feelingly sing :—
Farewell, ye bright visions which gladdened my childhood,
And thoughts once so full of delight unto me,
Since I've found her at last, the lov'd one of my bosom—
The hope of my heart, the pride of my e'e.

TROTTIE TRIDDLES.

Come to bozie, Trottie Triddles,
Croodle bonnie, cuddle in ;
Da is fairly oot o' hiddles,
An' mither has mair need to spin

Hush-a-ba, my bonnie lammie,
Sing yer sang an' sleep awhile ;
Wauken guid, like Teen an' Tammie,
Wi' a facie fu' o' smile.

Mither likes a smilin' Jeannie—
Jeannie's bonniest when she smiles ;
Big an' braw as Tam an' Teenie—
Twa wee rogies fu' o' wiles.

Wink, wee hinnie, hide yer eenie,
An' I'll hap ye owre the heid ;
Bogles winna middle Jeannie,
If she sleep an' wauken guid.

Angels kind aye guard wee Jeannie,
Sleepin' in her cradly-ba,
Clappin' Tammie, kissin' Teenie,
Whan they come an' gang awa'.

A RUN THROUGH NATURE.

Oft through Nature's fields I'm stealing,
Arm in arm with Poesy's queen,
Gath'ring food for thought and feeling,
From each stirring sight and scene.

Wooing virgin life and beauty
Springing into light in spring,
Drafting lines for love and duty,
While the bells of labour ring.

Oft in fossil beds a-digging,
Nature's mummies to exhume,
Where for once she seems intriguing,
Holding lifeless forms in bloom.

Often 'mong the snow-capp'd mountains,
Where eternal winter reigns,
Then by full and flowing fountains,
Sparkling mirrors of the plains.

Nature's sunny holms and harbours,
Where the weary find repose,
Lovers' rosy bowers and arbours,
Where they pledge and pay their vows.

Often standing by the ocean,
List'ning to her savage roar,
While her waves with wild commotion
Dash with fury 'gainst the shore.

Then by ample lake or river,
Whimp'ring brook or purling rill,
Always noisy, silent never,
Ever struggling, never still.

While then I am softly stealing,
With fairy Poesy's blooming queen,
Through such fields of thought and feeling,
Grand in every sight and scene.

May I ne'er forget my standing,
Truly grand, yet grandly true,
Strong in purpose, ever banding
All that's great and good anew.

THE FLOWER OF THE DEVON.

Flow on, silv'ry Devon, fair stream, to the ocean,
Wand'ring child of the mountain, the moorland, and mead ;
Give me pathos and power to paint that fair flower
That blooms aye sae bonnie on thy sunny bankhead ;
Where, from first gleams of morning to gloom of the gloamin',
Fair Nature's illum'ner's aye shedding his rays,
Inswathing in glory sweet, charming young Flora,
That blooms aye sae bonny on thine evergreen braes.

Her skin is as fair as proud England's rare roses,
As they glow in their glory in summer's full prime,
And her eye is as blue as the blue bell that closes
To guard its rare beauties at day's sweet decline ;
For none e'er bloomed fairer, or richer, or rarer,
By mountain or meadow, in sunshine or haze,
Than charming young Flora, my heart's chiefest glory,
That blooms aye sae bonny on thine evergreen braes.

Her voice is as sweet as the lark's in the morning,
When he soars to the lift, with the dew on his wing,
All dangers defying, and ilk peril scorning,
Making woodland and welkin with melody ring.
Then laud her, ye lovers of beauty and nature,
For love fills her young heart, and glows in her gaze,
While none could be truer, as tried friend or wooer,
As she blooms aye sae bonny on thine evergreen braes.

Young buds are bursting around this young blossom,
Which may in their turn other bosoms inspire,
And awake from their slumbers the bard's glowing numbers,
Till like lambkins they play 'mong the chords of his lyre.
But such peradventures, so seeming and likely,
I'll leave unto others to marshal in praise,
And sing but of Flora, sweet, charming young Flora,
That blooms aye sae bonny on thine evergreen braes.

What heart would not love her ? what hand not defend her,
And guard her rare beauties, so charming and fair,
From the rude, ruthless spoiler who'd seek to defile her,
And tarnish her virtues so precious and rare ?
For ne'er fairer blossom on Nature's own bosom
E'er sprung into beauty in Spring's virgin days,
Than charming young Flora, all peerless in glory,
'Mong her sisters of beauty on thy evergreen braes.

EMILY LEITH,

AUTHOR of "Thoughts and Remembrances," a volume of poems evincing wealth of fancy and much ease and freshness, comes of an ancient Aberdeenshire family. She is the third daughter of John Farley Leith, Esq., Q.C. (of the English Bar, and Bencher of the Middle Temple), late Member of Parliament for the City of Aberdeen. Miss Leith was born in Calcutta, where her father was then practising at the Bar as a leading Counsel. She has been a frequent contributor of poems to various magazines and newspapers under the signature of "E.L.," and her volume of poems, which has been very favourably received, was published by Messrs David Bryce & Son, Glasgow, in 1885. The printer and publisher have, with conspicuous taste and success, aided her efforts to provide a little work that will be prized not only by the ordinary reader, but by the cultured and scholarly as well. Her thoughts evince natural tenderness, meditative imagination, and genuine poetical feeling, expressed in pure and graceful language.

KATE "BARLASS."

Grey rose the Convent walls near ancient Perth ;
Snow lay around upon the frost-bound earth ;
Snow clothed the hills, in tumbling masses piled
Above each other in confusion wild ;
Dark, ghostly firs their misty shapes defined
Against the background of the hills behind ;
From their black shadows, shrouding rock and glen,
Crept forth the shadows of three stealthy men,
Just as the Convent clock out-clanging told
The hour of midnight from the belfry old.
Some hours had passed since, on the frosty air,
Had rung the Angelus to evening prayer ;
Since white-robed monks within the chapel dim
Had raised to Heaven their holy chant and hymn.
One humble form, low-kneeling with the rest,

None entering, seeing his royal state, had guessed
The King within the Convent walls had sought
Repose for body, and retreat for thought.
Within his private chamber, with a few
Beloved and trusty friends, he then withdrew ;
Beguiled with music far into the night,
Of Time's swift footsteps scarce he marked the flight.
Walter, the page, whose locks of auburn red
Shone like a nimbus round his youthful head,
Bore cups of wine around, that every guest
His King might pledge ere he retired to rest.
Scarce had he left the room, when sudden—shrill—
His voice cried, "Traitors," and their blood ran chill ;
"Traitors ! " once more the piercing shriek—again !
Then muffled groans, and a low sob of pain.
The guests, affrighted, started to their feet ;
With terror each his fellow's eyes did meet.
A scuffle at the door ! "God save the King ! "
And friends unarmed around him form a ring.
Sweet Mistress Catherine of the Douglas race,
The fine blood mounting to her noble face,
Flew to the door to bar it, when she saw—
O treachery base !—the bar was there no more !
Lo ! swift as thought, for her dear monarch's sake,
(How could she pause with his Royal life at stake ?)
Her smooth, white arm within the staple thrust ;
"O'er Catherine's body come, if come ye must."
One moment only could that tender flesh
Resist the onset fierce—as in a mesh,
Her King was trapped. A crash ; the bursting door ;
Then o'er her body, prostrate on the floor,
Rushed in three men, their bloody daggers drawn—
Woe to the traitors that they'd ere been born.
Nought now could save King James, the good, the just,
They pierced his body through with many a thrust ;
Then through the shadowy night the traitors fled,
Leaving a nation to bewail its dead.
Brave Mistress Douglas, with fair Scotland's fame,
Be evermore immortalized thy name ;
Still shall thy deed, through all the ages ring,
And men exclaim, "See how she loved the King."

BY-AND-BY.

Farewell, bright dawns and perfume-laden airs,
Faint with the breath of roses newly blown ;
Warm, slumbrous noons, when sleep our haunting cares,
Long summer days and nights too swiftly flown.
With sighs and sad regrets we saw you go ;
Why did you leave us, who had loved you so ?

'Neath sapphire skies, by starry hedgerows sweet,
Laced with pearled threads of gossamer, we went,
Wild summer blooms beneath our wandering feet,
And summer in our hearts—on love intent.
"I will return," you said, "when roses blow,"
That time we said "Good-bye"—a year ago.

But I alone have seen them bloom and die,
While you have passed beyond the shadows here
Into the light—I'll follow by-and-by.
Meantime I wait and hold the roses dear,
And summer sacred, for the love I bear,
Until we meet again some day, somewhere.

BLOWING BUBBLES.

Children are we, our airy bubbles blowing,
Laughing, we see them lightly float away,
Life's sterner side unheeding, or unknowing,
We clutch at pleasure while 'tis called to-day.

To-day, and yet to-day, and so time wingeth,
And armour rusts the while, and hearts grow cold,
The bubble's gone, e'en with the mirth it bringeth,
Cheerless and lone, we wake to find us old.

For wind-blown fame we see men striving, dying;
'Tis self-hood all, a bubble at the best.
We sacrifice to self, all else denying,
Upon the altar of a vague unrest,

While life, the hydra-headed, round us teeming,
Demands our hearts and brains to work and fight,
And burning questions press while we lie dreaming,
And wrongs cry out which we might help to right.

On one hand ease, all earnest labour shirking,
Ignoble ease, ere noble rest be won;
Upon the other, in the furrows working
Through noon's fierce glare, and in the end—"Well done."

DANTE AND BEATRICE.

Young Dante, with the unfathomable eyes,
In fair, dream-haunted Florence, long ago,
That flower of sculptured thought in poet wise,
You lived and drank of streams eterne, which flow
From rose-crowned heights to water Paradise.

Pure as the lilies that she moved among,
There crossed your path the angel of your dreams,
Beatrice, around whose slender form there throng
Visions of light celestial, heavenly gleams,
And all your life was moulded into song.

Boy-worshipper, at her sweet shrine you knelt,
Your thoughts being raised to worlds beyond the sun;
When first you saw your childish saint, you felt
Goodness and Truth and Beauty were all one,
Since in the Monna Bice all three dwelt.

By reverent love your soul was purified,
And in the days that followed, when from sight
Your light was gone, and you had well-nigh died,
Life seemed like death, and day was quenched in night,
But life's fresh current set with fuller tide.

Seer and Prophet now! The child you sung,
Crowned with grey olive, beckons with her hand;
Flowers from hands insensible are flung,
As out of sight you pass. Eternal stand;
Dante and Beatrice for ever young.

HOLY ISLE—A REMINISCENCE.

Sweet ocean flower upon the Northern sea,
Steeped in the tender light of memory,
I see thee, with thy ruined and cloistered pile,
Fair Holy Isle.

What visions crowd upon the inner eye!
Soul-pictures of the past which cannot die;
And musing thus in thought, island, once more
Upon thy shore.

Child of the storm, and mist of foam and spray,
Since I beheld thee years have passed away,
And many suns have set with dying smile
On Holy Isle.

I see thee now, re-peopled, as of old,
Saint Cuthbert's monks safe sheltered in thy fold,
Or sending forth brave Aidan through the land,
The Cross in hand.

Again I see thee, Lindisfarne, bereft
Of all thy stately worshippers, and left
A prey to those thine altars who defile,
O Holy Isle.

Dark were the days of fire and flame and sword,
Of martyrs' blood—the Church's seed—out-poured,
And bright the faith proclaimed with dying breath,
And strong in death.

Such are the thoughts that come when daylight dies ;
Slowly the pictures fade before mine eyes,
And I return from wandering awhile
On Holy Isle.

A GREETING—ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

Hail, wife, God-chosen ! I have waited long
For this glad consummation. From among
The daughters of my kindred far away
Thou com'st to-day.

Before thine infant lips could lisp His name,
He destined thee for me—thy love I claim ;
Be thou my help-meet through the coming years,
In smiles and tears.

The days wherein thy childish feet did roam
Along the upland valley of thy home,
And 'mid the lilies tall were wont to stray,
More white than they.

Those days which brought me manhood came and went,
And took from me the boyish, glad content,
With which I once had bound the golden shocks,
And fed the flocks.

Oft from my father's tents I've wandered wide,
Across the fields alone at eventide,
That none the burden of my heart should see,
To dream of thee.

I've seen thee in the visions of the night,
I've heard the rustling of thy garments light,
And felt thy presence round me in the air,
And everywhere.

To wake alone beneath the starry skies,
Gazing on me with cold, unpitying eyes,
While all around me peacefully have slept,
And I have wept.

But yesternight I saw thee by the well,
In whose cool depths the evening shadows fell,
Thy pitcher borne aloft, and fairer fair
Than angels are.

And o'er my soul there swept a joy divine—
A thousand voices echoed "She is thine,"
Then down upon the crocus-sprinkled sod
I knelt to God.

I watched for thee across the sunset plain,
And viewed thy camels' slowly moving train ;
While yet afar I saw thy form alight
All veiled in white.

And I have hasted on with wingëd feet
To greet thee, wife, to give thee welcome meet ;
Lift up thine eyes, Rebekah, I have come
To lead thee home.

ELLA BURTON,

ELDEST child of John Hill Burton, LL.D., D.C.L., Historiographer Royal for Scotland, and his wife Isabella Lauder, was born in Edinburgh in 1845. After her father's second marriage she resided with her aunt, Miss Mary Burton, at Liberton Bank. Having supplemented a Boarding School education, by attending such classes and examinations as were then open to women—"The Ladies' Educational Association," "The Society of Arts," "The Watt Institute," &c., at which latter she became life member of the "Debating Society and Essay Association," Miss Burton betook herself to literature, and wrote "Special Correspondent" articles, translations of German and French poetry, as well as original verses for the *Scotsman*, *Aberdeen Herald & Weekly Free Press*, *Dundee Courier & Argus*, and other newspapers. She also delivered lectures in Edinburgh and the provinces on "Women's Suffrage," and poetical and literary subjects, such as "Chaucer and his Contemporaries," "The Heroines

of Shakespeare," &c. An excellent little book, written by our poetess, entitled "Miss in the Kitchen, or a Week's Misadventures in Housekeeping," attained wide popularity, and was followed by several other delightful and useful publications.

Miss Ella Burton was married in 1878 to James Rodger, M.D., M.A., Aberdeen. For several years she has occupied much of her time in writing "Sketches of the Home Lives of the Royal House of Stuart," a historical novel, and other important works containing some of her fine historical ballads. She also continues to write articles and verses in various magazines and newspapers, where her productions are popular, and read with deep interest. Altogether, the subject of our sketch is gifted with a fine artistic faculty. Her ballads show warm patriotism, and a deep and intense love of her country. They are stirring pictures of the time of feud and romance, when bold hearts were ready to ride out either to bridal or foray. Her shorter pieces are comprehensive and cogent, and possess a sweet simplicity, with frequent touches of fine poetic glow. Regarding "Lady Margaret," we are told that Lady Margaret Drummond was a favourite of King James IV. of Scotland during his earlier years, and lived in seclusion at Drummond Castle, where, it is said, she and her young sister died suddenly by poison. James entered into an agreement to wed the Princess Margaret of England, which gave colour to the popular idea that he had some share in the crime.

THE DOMINIE'S SNUFFBOX.

A YULETIDE TALE OF AULD DUNDEE.

In days langsyne, in days of auld,
When oor Dundee, as I've been tauld,
Was but a burgh toon—

There lived an ancient Dominie,
As learned and crabbèd as mote be;
  Richt feared by idle loon.

This ancient, crabbèd Dominie
A snuffbox had, as you may see;
  Oftimes wi' aged wight,
Or wi' some quaint auld-warld carle,
'Twas roond, and 'twas, for a' the warl',
  Of ebony like night.

This ancient, crabbéd Dominie
Frae horn-rimmed spectacles did see
  Ilk prank o' lad and lass;
And whish! his taws cam whirling doon
Upon the laughter-loving loon
  Wha sniggered i' the class.

Howe'er it were, it came to be,
That, spite o' specs and Dominie,
  And taws wi' fingers nine,
A' runcled up in wily knot,
In spite o' palmie smart and hot,
  The bairns their mem'ries tine.

In vain the taws is bruntit weel,
To gar the knickums dance and squeal;
  Lads, lasses, baith the twain,
Right stupid glower, as they were fleyed,
While the tane grat the tither played—
  Dux, booby, a' was ane.

Aince at Yuletide—that was a day!
To sing its praises in my lay
  Indeed I am richt fain;
The lasses sat as bricht as preens,
Beside them were the laddie weans,
  And absentees were nane.

Examination noo was held,
And weel the bairns hae a' been tell'd
  The maister to uphauld,
Abjured they've been frae this day week,
At morn and at mirk midnight eke,
  To learn like scholars bauld.

Wi' history they hae been deaved,
Geography, would you believ't!
  They ken hoo far 's 't to Rome;
And yet, in troth, what do you think,
They cudna write its name in ink—
  The name o' their ain home.

The Dominie's especial joy
Was in geography, ilk boy
  Was tauld, "Look weel to me;
When I shall say, 'What shape's the earth?'
You must say 'Round,' all in a breath,
  For round it is," quoth he.

"And I will take my snuffbox out,
'"Tis round, 'tis round,' you must all shout;
  The earth, the snuffbox too—
Both are alike; thus kept in mind,
I trust you will not be behind,
  But answer give that's true."

Oh! what a day o' days was this!
A glorious time it was. I wiss
  The Provost, in reid coat,
Was there, wi' laced and cockit hat,
And scar on cheek, that he got at
  Culloden, where he fought.

His leddy, too, dressed in sic braws—
A damask robe as never was
  Seen i' the Kirkgate School;
Twa Bailies sat wi' frowning mien,
As if in Coort they baith had been;
  The minister in's seat.

But, grandest sicht o' a', was seen,
The Dominie, as in a dream,
  Wi' ruffles o' fine lace,
Resplendent in a lang-tailed goon,
Hair poodered, tied wi' ribbons broon,
  And sic a kindly face.

Ilk scholar stares wi' anxious look,
As Dominie tak's up the book,
  And cries, "What shape's the earth?"
A pause, confoonded stand the weans,
Confusion o'er them how'ring seems,
  And choked appears their breath.

An awfu' moment, 'twas I trow;
The box the Dominie had now
  Was square, o' silver clear—
It was the snuffbox that he had
On Sabbath mornings, when ilk lad
  Did view him without fear.

It wasna roond, na, it was square—
The scholars without thought or care
  In ae breath lood they cry—

"Like maister's snuffbox, roond ilk day,
On Sunday's square, when we get play."
An a'body quo "Fie!"

The Provost stood, and he leuch loud,
His lady rose, and low she bowed,
Then angry turned awa,
The Bailie cursed and banned in glee,
The minister said, douce man he,
"That's heterodoxy see."

The ancient Dominie in rage,
Let fly, in spite o' his great age,
At scholars, lad and lass;
And loud he swore and tore his hair,
And vowed that he would live nae mair,
And sae it cam' to pass.

The lasses fled, the lads ahint,
And aifter them, a' in a glint,
There flew the specs and box,
And syne the Dominie, puir man,
Fleeing as fast as fast's he can,
Awa' frae taunts and mocks.

"Lord's sake, ye idiots," loud he cries,
"'Tis roond," and as he flies
Plump leaps he in the Tay;
Where deep the darkling water flows
He fell, and never more he rose,
And finished is my lay.

But still, they say, when Yule days come,
His gurly ghaist is seen by some
To rise above the tide;
"'Tis roond," it shrieks, "ye idiots hear,
Or else ye shall the brunt taws fear,
And punishment abide."

Then syne it sinks beneath the wave,
And lost is passion's angry rave,
Alas! poor Dominie—
A lesson thou to those who do
Teach only words, lest they should rue
And ruin find like thee.

LADY MARGARET.

Oh, lovely Lady Margaret,
Bright shone the sun upon that morn,
When thou wert fair as early rose,
As sweet rose doomed to fade forlorn.

Oh, merry Lady Margaret,
The birds sang in the castle trees ;
Blythe thy young sisters' laughter rang
Across the bonnie summer breeze.

Oh, regal Lady Margaret,
You feasted out of cups of gold ;
And all that's rich and all that's rare
Was thine, and courtiers manifold.

Oh, pallid Lady Margaret,
Why art thou turned so wan and wae ?
Why mute are thy two sisters young,
That ever were so glad and gay ?

Oh, poisoned Lady Margaret,
Life's festival's nae mair for thee ;
The fairest flower must fade and die
Afore the King's bride cross the sea.

Oh, dying Lady Margaret,
Thou liest in robes of samite white,
And at thy feet thy sisters twain,
So nought is left of life's delight.

Oh, murdered Lady Margaret,
There are three tombs in Dunblane choir ;
But nane dare tell wha did the deed—
That deed sae cowardly and dire.

MY WILDFLOWER.

Thou'rt like the gowan, lassie,
So artless and so fair ;
It fills my heart with rapture
To view thy beauty rare.
Alone and unregarded,
I would not leave thee here
To bloom and wither lowly—
My lonely heart come cheer.

" Thy words are heedless, dearest,"
She said with whispering sigh ;
" If I came to the city
What could I do but die ?
The city flowers triumph
In brighter hues than mine ;
Though love beamed true and tender,
Yet the wildflower would pine."

"Dost think thy charms could dwindle,"
I said, "sweet-heart of mine?
Dost deem that hothouse roses
Have radiance like thine?
My mother decks proud vases
With wild flowers sweet and pale,
For fickle fashion favours
The flow'rets of the dale.

Could I ere love another
As erst I have loved thee?
The gowan rises peerless
From every flowery lea.
But in the city world
Reign flowers of rural hue,
And there, thou fairest wildflower,
A Queen thou shalt reign, too."

THE TROOPER'S SONG.

(From the German of Herwegh.)

The anxious night is passed away,
We silent ride in dawn of day;
We silent ride to death.
The morning winds, how sharp they blow;
Hostess! a glass before we go
Unto our latest breath.

Alas! young grass so fresh and green,
Like roses red thou'lt soon be seen;
All red with blood thou'lt lie.
I drink to thee first, sword in hand;
I drink to thee, O Fatherland;
For thee, for thee I die.

A second draught I drain to thee;
To thee, O Freedom, shall it be—
This bitter draught to thee.
And what remains to thee I drink,
Christ's Church; oh, mayst thou never sink,
In death beloved by me.

Unto my love—the wine is gone;
I hear the bullet's whizzing song;
Bring *her* when here I lie.
Upon the French like storms new born;
Oh, trooper's joy at early morn,
To die, to die, to die.

A SONG OF RED AND BLUE.

(From the German of Wollheim.)

See here, how proud I gaze around,
With red and blue my bosom bound ;
For truth is blue and love is red—
These I shall love till I am dead.

The fairest things on this earth seen,
Which touch our hearts, the most, I ween,
Are painted there in blue and red—
These I shall love till I am dead.

When I on nature gaze around,
Roses and violets deck the ground ;
The violets blue, the roses red—
These I shall love till I am dead.

When to my dearest one I go,
With brimming joy our souls o'erflow ;
Her blue eyes and her cheeks so red—
These I shall love till I am dead.

When honour calls, then, sword in hand,
I'll shed my blood for Fatherland ;
My steel so blue, my blood so red—
Hues I shall love till I am dead.

And when you bare me to the grave,
The coffin deck, my brothers brave,
With a bright band of blue and red—
Hues I shall love till I am dead.

HUGH M'KENZIE,

AWORTHY son of St Crispin, was born at Kilmarnock in 1828. He says—"It would be a hard task to find the register of my birth in any session clerk's book in the parish. The omission is owing to two things. Being a twin, and baptised by Burns's 'Great M'Kinlay,' who was of a very careful

nature, and who said to my father, 'James, I would advise you to let the registering of your twins stand for a time, as perhaps they might not both live, and it would cost you two shillings to get them done.' This was an important matter then to a shoemaker, as my father was; so time went on; my twin brother died at the age of nine months, and I was never registered." At the age of six Hugh was sent to a school taught by an old "bonnet-dresser." "He was a good teacher," says our poet, "and many a time have I marked down his slender income, while a boy went round with a bonnet, on Monday mornings, collecting the fees, and calling out as each scholar gave according to their classes—2d, 2½d, and 3d. The highest sum the collection ever amounted to was about 12s." When about eleven years of age, he left school to learn the shoemaker trade. "The 'claums' was put between my knees, and, oh! the dreary hours that shoemakers until lately had to work—in summer to eight, and in winter till ten o'clock at night." Although he must have had very little time for reading or mental culture, we find that when only sixteen he wrote his first poetical production, and had the pleasure of seeing it in print soon after. From M'Kie's "Burnsiana" we learn that Mr M'Kenzie wrote a Burns Centenary Prize Song (1859), second poem for the Kilmarnock Prize Medal. Mr M'Kie adds—"Mr Mackenzie has since published a small volume, and in March, 1877, he wrote lines on the proposed Kilmarnock Burns Statue, and a song on the laying of the foundation stone of the Kilmarnock Burns Monument on 14th September, 1878; tune—'For a' that and a' that.' Likewise, lines on the unveiling of the Burns Statue, 9th August, 1879." In 1866 he published a selection of his pieces in book form, and the volume met with a kind reception. Our shoemaker is still at the stool, singing and writing as he feels inclined. He expresses his feelings with ease and rhythmical

cadence. His pictures of Scottish life and manners in the past are graphic and thoughtful, displaying delicate perception of character, and a heart keenly observant of life's experiences. They have been characterised as faithful transcripts of scenes which have impressed, and feelings which have animated him.

THE RUINED COT.

'Tis sad to sing when the heart is sair,
Or smile at the coming ill,
But sadder to gaze on yon ruin'd cot
'Neath the broo o' Craigie Hill ;
For, oh ! sic thoughts through my brain do flit
O' times that are past and gane,
When to me that cot
Was the dearest spot,
For I ca'd that cot my hame.

Lang years hae flown by since 'neath its roof—
But oh ! what a change since then !
My bride I took hame a wedded wife,
And I the proudest o' men.
Nae won'er I was a happy man,
Wi' her my lot for to share,
For she was the pride
O' the country-side,
Sae blooming, sae young and fair.

A cosie *but*, and a cosie *ben*,
A canty and clean fire-en',
Wi' a thrifty wife and rosie weans,
A cheery bit cot 'twas then ;
And in the yard at oor wee house-en',
Where rowan and plum trees grew,
The wee linties cam',
As days they grew lang,
And lilted their sangs anew.

But fled for aye, for ever awa',
Rowed up wi' years o' the past,
Those blithesome days in that wee cot hoose,
Where I thocht to spen' my last.
My heart fills fu' when I see its wa's
Stan' lanely, roofless, and bare ;
For they bring to min'
The days o' lang syne,
Sae happy, and free o' care.

But noo a' oor bairns, and her whase smile
Did cheer up oor happy hame,
A' lie at rest in yon auld kirk-yard—
Noo kith nor kin hae I nane.
As I see that cot I'm sick o' life—
This life though it's but a span ;
For here I am left,
And of a' bereft,
A frail and a lane auld man.

THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.

Yon mould'ring house, fast sinking in the past,
That creaking moans to every surly blast,
Within its crumbling walls my memory brings
Scenes of my youth, with all their by-past things.
'Twas here to yield I first was taught by rule
To strangers' frowns within this little school ;
Since then how oft to tyrants on life's way
We bend and scorn them as we loathe their sway.
'Twas here our master taught his little band,
Dread of the rod—we bowed to his command ;
Stern looks brought silence, and his smile brought joy,
Thus fear'd and loved by every girl and boy.
Still well I mind how fill'd with awe and fear
At all around that day when first brought here,
And when the master led me to my seat
How strange seem'd all, and how my heart did beat.
Timid I felt as each one stared at me
While rising first to learn my A B C ;
But Time sped on, and true unto his rule
In changing all miss'd not our little school.
New faces came, while old familiars went,
With studies o'er to push their fortune's bent,
Their brains ne'er burdened with too much of lore,
Enough if they could read their *Barries* o'er,
Their Bibles know, write, and could cypher too,
Altho' this last could but the very few.
No books of progress then to stuff our boys
Like learned wind-bags, light, though full of noise.
Few were our studies, but we learn'd those few ;
No sketching all, and nothing rightly do,
Nor books on books to make a pompous show,
But what we learn'd we truly had to know
That even now, though hoary Time has cast
Those youthful days amongst the years now past
Our early lessons linger to the last.

Oh, dear old school, with sad delight I gaze
Upon thy walls, which time must soon erase,

Thy tott'ring walls dismantl'd and laid bare,
Sad emblem they of what we all must share ;
For men and things alike do pass away—
Kings, courts, and schools are swallowed by decay.
But where is now the teacher ? or the taught,
Who glow'd with health, with eager pursuits fraught,
Whose buoyant spirits chas'd the hours away
As hope stood pointing to the future day
When youth was o'er, and manhood's state should find
Them great and good, a blessing to mankind ?
Alas ! alas ! the teacher's long since dead ;
Yon grassy mound now haps his narrow bed ;
Stern where he ruled, he had to yield at last
To sterner Death, and's number'd with the past.
His pupils, too ; those few still left to share
Our troubles here are scatter'd everywhere.
Some sought a home 'cross the Atlantic's wave,
Grasping at fortune, risk'd a stranger's grave ;
Some the Antipodes for change did try,
Left their old homes, yet left them with a sigh ;
And England, too, has tempted some to roam,
The Sister Isle has given to some a home ;
Few live in ease, more feel affliction's rod,
And one is now a reverend man of God.
No distant date till all shall be no more,
Forgotten quite 'pon Time's receding shore.
Farewell, old school, thou'lt soon be cleared away,
For things of newer mode, to serve their day,
Serve but their time ; make room—by fashion led—
For others, thought still grander, in their stead.
Thy very site no longer shall be known,
Where happy bands did oft their lessons con,
And all these bands shall be forgot and gone.

BURNS'S CENTENARY PRIZE SONG.

Ye ask a sang in Burns' praise !
I fear 'twad ding my harp to staves
To sing o' him, or yet his lays,
Wi' half the fire o' Robin.

For Robin's harp was strung wi' glee ;
Its every note was poesy,
That fill'd wi' wildest ecstacy
The matchless sangs o' Robin.

Nae theme cam' wrang to Robin's lyre—
Be't Satire's dart, or Patriot's fire,
Or soothing love—'twould never tire—
'Twas a' the same to Robin.

The Muse she left her seat abune,
And Coila's harp she took him doon ;
'Twas a' in fettle and in tune
When it was gien to Robin.

And watching she stood by his side,
When first his notes our bardie try'd ;
She heard its tones, and smiling cry'd—
"They'll a' be prood o' Robin."

She bade him sing in Scottish phrase
Auld Scotland's dells and broomy braes,
Till Scots unborn the sang wad raise
In praises o' their Robin.

That harp our bard aye kept in tune,
Sae true to Nature was its soun',
The Muse wi' holly did him croon
The Prince o' Poets, Robin.

Deil tak' the loon wad try to pu'
A leaf frae aff our poet's broo ;
The envious wretch, we'd gar him rue
The meddling wi' our Robin.

Let ithers o' their bardies blaw,
Their Drydens, and their Byrons shaw,
But feint a ane amang them a'
Could sing a sang wi' Robin.

When Robin sings—"the lasses braw,"
We lo'e the jades, ilk ane and a',
And frae his sangs sic rapture draw
That nane can gie but Robin.

And when he strikes his *rustic* lyre
In Freedom's cause, what notes o' fire
Shoot tremblingly alang the wire !
In thrilling tones frae Robin.

Auld Scotland's waes he sairly mourn'd,
And for her wrangs his bosom burn'd,
While lordling's smiles he proudly spurn'd—
"A man's a man," said Robin.

Hypocrisy he sairly lash'd,
Grim Superstition stood aghast,
And Bigotry was sair abash'd
In presence o' our Robin.

Then let us toast our poet's name—
The highest on the roll o' fame ;
Although a hunner years hae gane
Since first we saw our Robin.

To Scotland's bairns his name is dear—
The ploughman bard they'll aye revere ;
Till Time rows up his hindmost year
We'll sing the sangs o' Robin.

JAMES GREIG MACKENZIE.

THE subject of this sketch is a native of Sutherlandshire. He was born at "The Hermitage," a sequestered and picturesque little spot situated midway between the pretty little seaside village of Golspie and Dunrobin Castle, one of the country seats of the Ducal House of Sutherland. His father, whose name was widely known and respected throughout the North of Scotland, leased for over twenty years the Golspie Mills, and also carried on a large business as a wood merchant, shipowner, &c. Circumstances induced Mr Mackenzie to alter his choice of a profession, and he was indentured to a solicitor. On the expiry of his indenture, although his experience of the law strengthened his strong dislike of it, he removed to Edinburgh for the purpose of attending the Law Classes, where he subsequently took a good position in the Honours Lists. His health becoming delicate, he was obliged to forego anything like hard work, and took a voyage to the Cape some years ago to recruit.

He has now been for several years on the Commissioned Staff of H.M. Sasine Office, Edinburgh. His first published verses appeared in one of the early parts of the *People's Friend*, and since that time his contributions have been cordially welcomed by a number of newspapers and literary journals. Mr

Mackenzie also writes sketches and essays, and these evince the possession of an easy, simple, and pleasing style, considerable critical discernment, and a rich fund of quiet humour and sparkling wit. This may also be said of many of his poetical productions, although generally they are thoughtful and reflective, and exhibit true pathos and tender feeling. His felicitous references to Nature are very melodious, and he interprets the spirit of its symbolism with a view to incite to the better performance of our duties. Altogether he is evidently a keen and intelligent lover of Nature, and he delights to paint the circling year in all its months and moods.

APRIL.

Subdued by sorrow—filled with hopes and fears,
Sad April mourneth for her sisters dead;
Her face besaddened and bedewed with tears,
In gloomy vesture and with downcast head;
But yet betimes her youthful soul grows strong,
And sunny smiles illume her tear-stained face,
Then happy nature greets her with a song,
And robes her figure in a garb of grace.
Bewreathed with smiles—bedewed with tears she stands,
And decks their graves with flowers from her hands.

OCTOBER.

All o'er the earth are strewn the yellow leaves,
With every wind they flutter here and there:
The corn is cut, and now the golden sheaves
Are bound and garnered in with loving care;
As if in sorrow for their foliage falling,
The rifled trees a mournful aspect wear,
Like mothers whom the hand of death appalling
Robs of the loved ones whom their bodies bear.
The singing birds have ceased their song of praise
And fled to winter in a warmer clime;
The woods no longer echo with the lays
Of these sweet singers of the summer time.
The sun at dawn enrobed in mist appears,
But ever and anon his golden rays,
Like gleams of Hope seen through a cloud of fears,
Shine sweetly smiling through the gloomy haze.

THE ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE.

We should not take for strength of soul what's only strength of lung,
Nor weigh a brother's weight of grief by measure of his tongue,
For fools oft pose before the world in fierce Byronic style,
And give for true poetic fire the sputterings of bile,
And as he oft is rich in words who is but poor in sense,
So sorrows which we can't express as oft are most intense.

Not they alone have sorrow known who sing in sweetest rhyme
The anguish of a moment or the sorrow of a time,
Divinely gifted is the soul which can its grief express,
But, nobler still, the silent strength which buries its distress,
For they who find in words of fire a voice for woes they bear
Stir in their souls a melody which takes away a share,
And grief which makes the burning tears forsake their briny bed,
Sheds in each tear a fiery drop which sears if left unshed.
But bitterness of bitterness, the blackness of despair
Surrounds the secret miseries which slumber in their lair,
And hungry griefs which gnaw the heart, but never find a tongue,
Are doubled thrice in bitterness, because they are unsung.
Though some in lines of sweetest rhyme their woes on paper place,
The hero bears his misery in lines writ on his face,
And proudly locks it in his breast, nor cares to men to tell
The agony which sears his soul, or seethes there like a hell.
All harmless is the sullen roar of thunder's mighty crash,
While Death is dealt on every hand by lightning's silent flash,
The shallow brook goes purling o'er its bed with babbling sound,
But silent as the grave flows on the stream of depth profound,
So, many hero hearts who bow 'neath sorrow's iron cross,
In silence bear their agony, in secret mourn their loss.
And though some sorrow-surcharged souls in singing comfort crave,
But *half* they sing, the other half goes with them to the grave.
The greatest griefs the greatest strength of saddest words defy,
And while unuttered grief will live, the uttered grief will die.
Ten thousand times ten thousand tongues throughout all nature preach
The soundless depths of silence, and the shallowness of speech,
The strange mysterious music beyond our senses' ken
Which pulses through the universe, and awes the souls of men,
In silence finds an utterance beyond the reach of art,
That speaks not to the outer ear, but whispers to the heart,
And swells in one sweet symphony in springtime from the sod,
Which lifts the grovelling souls of men in wondering awe to God,—
That God unseen, whose voice unheard, through Nature's countless years,
In silence rules the universe, and guides the wondering spheres,

Whose awful majesty supreme an Unseen Presence there,
The sun, and moon, and stars proclaim, and earth, and sea, and air—
Not they alone have sorrow known who give their sorrow breath,
What eloquence of speech can match the silent psalm of—Death!

AN INVOCATION.

Oh, Spirit of Poesy, teach;
Oh, God give me voice till I sing
The thoughts that escape from my reach,
That come, but like shadows take wing,
When I seek to encage them in speech.

Lend me the voice of the lark,
Soaring from earth to the sky,
So that the people may hark
Once to my lay ere I die.
God give me voice for the song
That swells in my soul like a billow,
And sways it as winds that are strong,
Swaying and bending the willow;
For the fever that feeds on my brain,
For the passion that flames in my breast;—
I wrestle and writhe with the pain,
The struggle, the strife, and the strain
Of thoughts that must die unexpressed.
Oh, God give me voice till I sing;
In song let my sorrow take wing:—

A bird in my bosom was born—
A bird without power of song;
While others sing round me in scorn,
I bitterly brood o'er my wrong.
I've struggled till strength is spent;
I've striven till weary and worn;
In fury of impotent rage
My soul beats the bars of its cage—
Has beaten its wings till they're torn
'Gainst the bars of its cage till they're bent;
But the song it would sing is unborn,
And will be until they are broken,
Or I for its woe find a vent
In words that another has spoken.

LOVE IS LOVE.

Better to live unloved, unloving to live and die,
Than to live and love, but unloved to live,

And a strong, true love for its ghost to give ;
A love that sings for a love that sighs,
A love that burns like the tropic skies—
Fierce, reckless love—for a love that's wise,
A love that lives for a love that dies—
For a love that's dead, if there's truth in eyes.
But love is love, though we love in vain,
Though eyes grow haggard, and locks grow grey ;
Though it break the heart, though it turn the brain,
If we love but once we must love for aye ;
So, while I wrestle with pride and pain,
My soul is singing this sad refrain :—
Love, love, love, why do you pass me by ?
Love conquers will, so I love thee still ;
Then why do you shun me, why ?
Love, love, love, ever with sob and sigh,
Come back to my breast, and make me blest,
For a desolate soul am I.

Better to live unloved, unloving to live and die,
Than wed love dead, and a heart grown cold ;
A heartless woman whose God is—Gold,
Whose God is gold, and whose life's a lie ;
Who sells the chattel she calls a heart
As goods are sold in the auction mart ;
Whose kiss is bought, and whose love is sold
To him alone who hath gold to buy,
Though she may shrink from his love embrace,
And curse the hour of her soul's disgrace.
But love is love, though we love in vain,
Though eyes grow haggard, and locks grow grey ;
Though it break the heart, though it turn the brain,
If we love but once we must love for aye ;
So, while I wrestle with pride and pain,
My soul is singing this sad refrain :—
Love, love, love, why do you pass me by ?
Love conquers will, so I love thee still ;
Then why do you shun me, why ?
Love, love, love ever with sob and sigh,
Come back to my breast, and make me blest,
For a desolate soul am I.

MY LOVE AND I.

My love and I fell out to-day,
The naughty little puss ;
She loves to tease me thus in play,
Provoking little puss.
I fear she is a petted child,
The wilful little puss,

Her ways though winning are so wild,
The wicked little puss.

Why, what is this? She's standing there,
Indignant little puss,
"Just give me back that lock of hair,"
Imperious little puss.
But while with pouting lips she stands,
And queenlike dictates her demands,
I rise and slyly seize her hands,
The rebel little puss,
And laughing, draw her face to mine,
Poor captive little puss;
Within her eyes love's light will shine,
Poor palpitating puss.

My arm steals softly round her waist,
Poor trembling little puss,
With shy sweet grace by nature led,
The loving little puss.
On my broad breast she lays her head,
And nestles there—poor puss;
With blood on fire, in ardent haste,
Her sweet, sweet lips with mine I taste,
Poor conquered little puss.

I fear she is a wayward pet,
The winsome little puss,
But ever since the day I met
With her, sweet charming puss,
My heart has never been my own;
And—oh, the pawky puss,—
With downcast eyes I heard her say
She'd lost her heart that very day;
By losing her's she did atone
For having stolen mine away,
My darling little puss.

JUST THEIR WAY!

Long years ago ere I had grown a man,
I had a fancy for my cousin Fan;
In sweet companionship our days went by,
And oft she kissed me, and would call me "Guy;"
Our little heads together we would lay
To fix a programme for each holiday,
And sitting side by side, or strolling arm in arm,
Would plot some mischief innocent of harm.
We loved each other in our childish way,
And as we grew our love grew day by day;

We quarrelled oft, and then with childish spite
Would call each other names, which was'nt right,
And often I to Fan was far more rude
Than little boys to little girls e'er should;
But always when our fits of temper passed
We kissed each other, and were friends more fast
Than we had been before the fight began;—
But this was ere I'd grown to be a man!
But now that I am grown to man's estate
Fan's manner to me is quite changed of late.
She's now a maiden in her eighteenth year,
But seems to hold me in less love than fear;
Looks at me fawn-like, and is cold and shy,
And always blushes when she calls me "Guy."
We seldom quarrel now—we never fight,
We used to *kiss*, but now we *say* good-night.
Love stands between a barrier, but a bond—
She grows more distant as she grows more fond;
It may be strange, but though Fan seems so cold
I *feel* she loves me *better* than of old.

THOMAS STEWART

WAS born at Monboy, in the parish of Brechin, in 1859. He received his education at Careston school until he was twelve years of age, and during the last two years of his educational career he only attended during winter—having, in summer, to assist his father, who was a farmer. On the death of his father, some years afterwards, the family removed to Broughty Ferry. Being unable to do anything but farm work, and too old to go as an apprentice to a trade, he tried his hand at anything that came in his way, and ultimately was employed by a grocer in Broughty Ferry. In course of time he "got behind the counter," and by perseverance and accommodating manners he soon worked himself up to be "first hand." In 1881 Mr

Stewart commenced business on his own account at Monifieth. This he conducted very successfully for several years, when he went into partnership with a Mr Burnett, and purchased a large business in Dunfermline, which is now the well-known firm of Stewart & Burnett.

Mr Stewart has written verse during spare moments ever since he left school, and he has been a frequent contributor to the local and other newspapers. He still loves and writes with a warm heart about rural scenes and occupations, and his poetical productions reveal a thoughtful mind and a warm human sympathy.

MY YOUNG DAYS.

This nicht I shut my wee room door, an' sit my waefu' lane,
And wait till Mem'ry gars me live my young days ower again;
Ilk scene fu' deft in sunny rays she paints and brings them near,
Till my auld haunts and hills I see, and weel-kent voices hear.

Again my rural hame I see in liquid sunshine drest,
And yon green braes, whaur birdies sing, throw up their leafy crest;
While frae the new-sprung tender blade blythe lambies lick the dew
That Sol has kissed wi' his gowd licht, and decked in sapphire hue.

I see them stalkin' ower the rigs, and cast the yellow treasure,
And clear I hear the curlew's notes, and peesweep's weel-kent measure,
As frae the misty howe there comes the whistle o' the plover,
To blend wi' Robin's "Lea Rig" some ploughman sings his lover.

Again I wander through the woods an' keek in ilka bush,
I dinna pass a single tree—they a' maun get a hush;
And whaur the babblin' burnie rins 'mong a' its ins an' oots,
Wi' glee I throw my jacket aff, and guddle for the trouts.

Noo on the velvet flow'ry sward I pu' the sweet bluebell,
And feel the loaded breath o' sweets that's wafted through the dell;
And watchin' summer cowies dance upon the gowany lea,
I'm charmed by notes that frae the sky descend like showers on me.

Noo stretched upon a sunny knowe whaur furz and crawtaes cling,
Whaur round aboot on every side the gay grasshoppers sing;
Noo startin' wi' my bonnet aff I chase the busy bee,
I'm sae intent, my days like hours, and hours like minutes flee.

Some seek the crowd-polluted room when grim care gie's a grup,
In Bacchanalian revelry to droon him in the cup;
But waukin' start wi' achin' head, clean pouch, and in despair,
To find that they, in ten-fold weight, hae added to their care.

But though Mammon aye deludes my grasp, the nasty tigget limmer,
When nicht comes round I'm happy still wi' thinkin' on youth's summer—
When my young life was like a rill fed by a crystal fountain,
That leaped in sunshine 'mong gay flowers while rolling down the mountain.

CONTENTMENT.

It ne'er was meant when we were sent
Life's thorny path to tread,
To mak' a-mene and aye complain
Frae risin' time till bed;
To aye lament in discontent
At ilka little flaw
In fortune's wheel as life we speel,
And a'thing to misca'.

It sairs nae end your wrath to vend,
And think yoursel' ill-used,
Because that fate in this estate
The gowden spoon refused?
Because that we aitmeal maun pree,
Oor hoose a but-an'-ben,
To toil ilk day in hodden grey,
Nae luxury to ken?

Na, na, it's no the grief and woe
We picture in our face
That help to bear the load o' care
That's heired the human race;
The face that's bricht, the heart that's licht,
The kindly word o' cheer,
The helpin' hand, the friends that stand,
Are what dry up the tear.

We've often read what Robin said
Was in a life sublime,

Let's strive wi' micht to make it richt,
Oor hearth a happy clime.
Tho' plain's oor fare, wi' purses bare,
That needna mak's think shame;
Wi' heapit purse we would be worse,
Had we nae love at hame.

Thro'oot the day, richt blythe and gay,
Let's whistle loud and sing,
Till hill and dale wi' music swell,
Like woodlands i' the Spring.
And you'll gie me, and I'll gie thee
A cheer as on we go,
For short's the day when we are gay,
And e'enin' brings our jo.

Wi' faces lang I'm sure it's wrang
To look sae soor and glum,
Cheer up your heart and do your pairt,
There's happy days to come.
Sae dinna stech, and grane and pech,
A monument of woe,
But gie's your best in sang or jest,
Mak' wit and fun to flow.

JEANNIE.

The scented briar, the leafy trees,
The yellow broom, the thyme-clad knowe,
The flow'ry sward the balmy breeze
In dells whaur maund'rin burnies row,
Hae aften soothed my troubled mind,
And wyled me frae the warld's care;
But Jeannie's smile and look sae kind
Enraptures me beyond compare.

The mellow thrush and blackbird gay,
The chaffinch sweet on flow'ry thorn,
The lintie blythe on dewy spray,
The warbling lark when upward borne,
Hae charmed me when I lanely strayed,
And filled me wi' a pleasure sweet;
But oh, my heart's in transport swayed
Wi' her low whispers when we meet.

At gloamin's hour, whaur saft winds sigh
Through the dewy, newborn blossom,
I meet my love, wha, blushing shy,
Leans on my swelling bosom.

Down in yon dell, whaur nane can see,
'Tis foretaste o' a bliss divine
To hear her say, "I lo'e but thee,"
And press her lips an' ca' her mine.

MRS WILLIAMSON,

MOTHER of "Effie," the well-known Galashiels poetess whose productions show a warm sympathy with the purest aspirations of the human heart, was born near Selkirk in 1815. Her father, Robert Milne, though but a ploughman, was a man of remarkable intelligence, and contributed his thoughts in the form of letters to the *Kelso Chronicle*. After a short education, received mainly from her father, and several years spent in service, she married, and having then more leisure, she indulged her taste for reading instructive books. Mrs Williamson's earliest literary effort was an essay on "Temperance," for which she gained the first prize in 1849. Ten years afterwards she contributed a poem to "The Border Bards," and for several years her poetical productions appeared in the Border newspapers. Her poetic feeling found voice for the first time during a two years' residence at Walkerburn, then a small village. In 1867 she was again successful as an essayist, gaining a prize of £10 given by the Rev. John Thomson, Hawick, for a paper on the "Evils of the Bondage System." Removing to Ireland soon after, she earned her third prize for literary work in the city of Cork—subject, "The Best Means of Harmonising the Interests of Capital and Labour," awarded by the Scottish Society of that city. She also gained a silver medal for work of a similar

nature. This was all accomplished by a woman in the midst of the cares of a household and four young children. That she did not neglect the minds of those committed to her trust, the literary productions and tastes of at least a daughter and son has amply proved, and the specimens we give of her poetry shows that she had a gentle and refined nature, and that although absent for about ten years from the country of her youth, she did not forget its early scenes and associations. Mrs Williamson died in 1882, having spent the latter part of her life in Galashiels and neighbourhood.

TO A TREE BY WALKERBURN.

Wavering in the silent sunlight,
Joyous, beautiful, and bright,
  Your green leaves play,
And to the breezes whisper low,
That through the woodlands softly flow,
  On Summer day.

How lovingly you stretch your arms,
As if to shield from all alarms
  The gentle flowers
That lowly nestle at your feet,
And shelter from the noontide heat
  In Summer hours.

And thou art vocal with the sound
Of happy music all day round;
  The song of praise
The feathered tenants of the air,
Who nestle in thy foliage fair,
  To their God raise.

And ever o'er its pebbly bed,
In murmurs low its wavelets led,
  The silvery stream;
Its sparkling waters kiss thy feet,
Its music to our ears as sweet
  As poet's dream.

Now sad, now like Æolian strings,
Thy music o'er my spirit rings,
  And Fancy sways.

The magic of sweet visions swells,
And o'er me throws the dreamy spells
Of other days ;

Of childhood's years when guileless free,
I gathered daisies on the lea ;
The frown and care
Of ignorance and errors born
Annoyed not in life's blissful morn
When all was fair.

And these sweet visions to my heart
Give strength to act a nobler part
In life's brief day ;
The soul to do or suffer, strong
When duty calls life's thorns among,
And evils sway.

RAIN.

The leaves upon the forest trees
Were brown and seared to view ;
The flowers hung and drooped their heads,
And wore a sickly hue ;
With anxious care the husbandman
His parchèd crops did see ;
The streams were nearly dry, and brown
The grass upon the lea.

But now a veil, the orb of day,
Draws o'er his dazzling face ;
The tiny drops now softly fall,
Then hurry on apace ;
Unto the dry and thirsty ground—
A blessed thing is rain ;
It pattering falls like music sweet
Upon the window-pane.

As drink for man and beast, and for
The dry and thirsty flowers,
Our Heavenly Father kindly sends
These sweet, refreshing showers.
The blessing falls on all alike—
On flowers, on shrub, and tree ;
No niggard Nature of her gifts—
Her beauties rich and free.

To meet the welcome draught, the oak
Its stately head lifts up ;
While for their share the sweet wee flowers
Present their tiny cup ;

No striving now, nor struggling,
For more than they can use ;
In meekness they the blessing take,
Nor the rich gift abuse.

Now on the dark, retiring cloud
God's faithfulness appears ;
He in the heavens—His wondrous sign—
A bridge of water rears.
O, lovely arch ! thy graceful form
With reverence deep we hail,
As thou thy span in glory throws
O'er verdant hill and vale.

Pearl drops on blushing rose-buds hang,
And glisten in the sun,
Which sweetly shines, now that the rain
Its work of mercy's done ;
Light fleecy clouds each other chase
Across the azure blue ;
The smiling earth in gratitude
Presents a verdant hue.

In woodlands wild the happy birds
Are singing forth again ;
The streamlets wild with noisy glee
Are rushing to the main ;
Trees lightly bend their dripping heads
While breezes softly pass ;
Starlike are daisies fresh and fair
Upon the dewy grass.

ELIZABETH ANN DEAS.

THE subject of this sketch was born in Edinburgh, where her father, Sir George Deas, was for many years one of the Senators of the College of Justice, under the title of Lord Deas. From her earliest childhood Miss Deas showed an earnest love of literature, and she was at all times an eager and appreciative reader both of prose and poetry. While

at school she was distinguished for the excellence of her composition in English verse; and after her school days were over she took pleasure in continuing her writing, and in studying the works of our best authors. Her literary taste was thus formed by a wide and varied course of reading. Accustomed to spend at least half of every year in the country, she was familiar with Nature in its every aspect, and her verses are full of charming allusions to those outdoor sights and sounds she loves so well.

Always fond of using her pen, Miss Deas has in recent years found in the pursuit of literature one of her chief pleasures—delicate health having obliged her to spend much of her time on the Continent, and in a great measure cut her off from more active enjoyments. Under the *nom-de-plume* of "Fauvette," she has contributed verses to various contemporary magazines and newspapers. These are very melodious, and possess much that is graceful, tender, and beautiful. Miss Deas is always true to Nature, and all her productions are high and pure in tone.

THE UNFORESEEN.

The dreaded hour came all too soon;
He tried to bear up for her sake,
But as he felt her clinging arms,
He thought his very heart would break.

"My sweet," he said, and stooped to kiss
The quivering lips all white with pain,
"Keep up thy heart, and pray for me;
Please God, I shall come home again."

'Twas his to taste the brunt of war,
But she had yet a harder part;
For her's it was to sit at home,
And listen to an aching heart.

And, oh, it whispered direful things
That filled her with a vague alarm;
Whilst he, though facing death himself,
Could think of her as safe from harm.

Death stalks about the battlefield,
All there his horrid form can tell ;
But, oh, how often we forget
He crouches by our hearth as well.

The soldier's dreams were peaceful ones,
Whilst her's were full of pain and dread ;
Death spared the warrior on the field,
But, oh, he claimed the maid instead.

SWEETHEART ABBEY.

(Near Dumfries.)

A bugle note, with clash of mail,
Rings out in Courance Hall,
Where goodly vassals, eighty strong
Await their chieftain's call.

"Beshrew me now," cries young Sir James,
"My Lord forgets the hour ;"
"Nor wonder," quoth the Knight of Stain,
"When in my Ladye's bower."

Once more a blast of bugle sounds ;
This time Lord Courance hears,
And whispers, "Sweet, a soldier's bride
Hath nought to do with tears."

About his strong and sunburnt neck
Her soft white arms she throws,
And, with that subtle clasp, for him
The pang of parting grows.

He holds her close, and, oh ! the much
And little of that bliss ;
And, oh ! the love, the strength, the length,
The passion of that kiss.

A moment later, and their chief
Has joined his men below,
And with those trusty followers
Rides forth to meet the foe.

. . . . . .

Why broods dark silence round the walls
Of Courance' stately tower?
What bode those looks of pity cast
Toward the ladye's bower?

Ah, me! 'tis but the old, old tale
Of young hearts rent in twain—
His dead and crushed by battle's blows—
Her's crushed and dead with pain;

For, after three long weary months
Of anxious watch and fear,
At length she welcomes back her lord—
But stretched upon a bier.

Oh! then; and she nor speaks nor weeps,
Nor utters any moan;
But lays her soft, warm lips on his,
And murmurs, "Sweet, mine own!"

Then those brave men of doughty deeds,
Those vassals stout and true,
Each feels his throat convulsed by sobs,
His eyes bedimmed with dew.

No need to weep! for in the act
Of that impassioned kiss
Her soul finds passage to her lord,
And enters into bliss.

Then James of Græme gives the command
(For he is next of kin)
That they should straightway dig a grave,
And lay them both therein.

And, later, he gave half his wealth
To build an abbey there,
And bade the monks thrice every year
To shrive their souls by prayer.

And so there rose a stately pile
Of chapel, crypt and nave:
And still fair Sweetheart Abbey stands
As headstone to a grave.

TRANSPLANTED.

With the first budlets of the tree;
With the first primrose of the sod;
With the first blossoms of the thorn
Her little baby came from God.

She loved it with her deepest love;
She tended it with ceaseless care,

The fragile blossom was so sweet,
So sweetly soft, so softly fair.

All through the long, warm summer days
Her little darling throve and grew ;
But as the flowers began to fade,
Her cherished blossom faded too.

With the last leaflets of the tree,
With the last flowerets of the plain,
With the last berries of the briar,
Her baby went to God again.

THE TRYSTING-TREE.

I wander far down by the heathery brae,
Where larches and rowans are washed in the spray ;
But the tree above all which for me holds a spell
Is the sturdy old oak at the foot of the dell ;
It is dear to my heart, and it ever must be,
For it sheltered the trysting of Nannie and me.

It was here I first saw her, one bright autumn morn,
Her hands full of poppies, her head decked with corn ;
Methought she was Ceres dropped down from the skies,
But Hebe herself, as she lifted her eyes ;
She blushed liked Aurora, and sped past this tree—
That blush sealed the fate of my Nannie and me.

Happy days of the past that can never return,
When we strolled on the moorland, or sat by the burn ;
She gathered blue hare-bells and bright scarlet hips—
I gathered the dew from her fresh, rosy lips ;
And we planned out a future, which never could be,
For death came and parted my Nannie and me.

But though faded the radiance from streamlet and hill,
And plaintive the notes of the lintie's gay trill,
In my dark world of sorrow this light I descry,
Like a bright star of promise hung out in the sky—
That the troth which we plighted beneath this oak tree
Shall bind us in heaven, my Nannie and me.

FORWARD.

What is remorse? an idle thing,
Made up of vain regrets and sighs ;
Its seeming aim to rouse the soul—
Its real effect to paralyse.

Think you it taketh nigher heaven
To brood upon the past and grieve,
Without the struggle to reform—
Without the effort to retrieve?

I tell you nay! for here on earth,
Where time to mourn is time to mend,
Sorrow for sin will not avail
Without improvement be its end.

'Tis easy to protest and wail,
But God requireth more than this;
He wants repentance, not remorse—
The last brings woe, the first brings bliss,—

Brings bliss, because of love divine,
Which kills the evil seed within;
Ah, me! it is a staggering thought,
This one of origin of sin.

But, God be thanked! not one man needs
To solve for his eternal good,
Since all God asks for that is this—
That he be loved and understood.

But though this mean undoubtedly
That "perfect love which casts out fear,"
Surely true love will ever strive
To please the one it holdeth dear

Use, then, the failures of the past
Only as spurs to urge anew;
Stoop to the Cross, He'll raise and crown,
For reason best He loveth you.

FLOWER LESSONS.

As daisies' little trustful eyes
Look upward from the sod,
So should our hearts in faith and love
Look ever up to God.

As violets shed sweet perfume round,
Though springing up 'mid weeds,
So should our lives, wherever cast,
Be fragrant of good deeds.

Dear little flowers, how sweet you are,
Doing the best you can

To gladden earth, and so fulfil
Your mission toward man.

Or if God choose to set you down
In quiet dark bye-ways,
You go on growing all the same,
Not seeking human praise.

Ah! this the secret, if we would
Be pleasing in God's sight,
Not to look first for man's applause,
But simply do the right.

If duty lie within our home,
And there we work our best,
We shall do all that God requires,
And He will do the rest.

MISS M. DUTHIE,

TEACHER, Balkello School, near Dundee, is a daughter of Mr George Duthie, noticed in the seventh series of this work. She is a native of Fettercairn, Kincardineshire, and served as a pupil teacher at Straton School, St Cyrus, from 1852 to 1857. From the latter year, till 1861, she was employed in Lady Harriet S. Forbes' private school, Fettercairn, which her ladyship gave up when a certificated teacher came to the village. Sir John Forbes then sent Miss Duthie to Luthermuir School —previously taught by Mr Donald, the well-known Arbroath poet—where she remained for about a year, when Sir John procured another situation for her in Pitullie Fisher School, Old Pitsligo, where she taught for about four years. She next removed to Fordoun —her school there being in the old chapel of St Palladius, within the churchyard. The skulls and other ghostly relics, and the gloomy, grave-like air

about the place, for a time put all thoughts of poetry out of her mind—for up till then she had written and printed numerous pieces. Through the influence of Lady Harriet, cousin of Lord Home, Miss Duthie obtained her present situation. She has the power of giving graceful and easy expression to her thoughts and feelings, and in some of her descriptive and reflective poems we find the outpourings of a genuine poetic nature.

THE SALE.

A gathering crowd in that quiet street,
Rolling of wheels, and trampling of feet;
And round the rich man's open door
They mingle together—rich and poor;
Rushing, crushing,
Jostling, and bustling,
They come to see the sale.

Once, where dignity reigned around
The elegant house, gay garden-ground,
Refinement ruled and flattery bowed;
Now chatters a mixed and motley crowd,
Jeering, sneering,
Wond'ring, plund'ring—
And now begins the sale.

Some speak in pity of him that's gone—
Not dead, but left for the city alone;
And in the same breath, "What can he think?"
I wonder where, or what we shall drink?"
Jumbling, fumbling,
Bidding and nodding,
And thus goes on the sale.

Clambering crowds on the marble stair,
Thro' gall'ries, lobbies, and everywhere;
Fingers sweep o'er the piano keys—
"Mamma, oh, buy the harp, if you please;"
Lolling, drawling,
Peering and nearing,
To watch how goes the sale.

Some step so rev'rent, feeling a shame—
Master no more, they honour his name;

Others strut proudly thro' the grand hall,
Themselves in debt, say "Pride gets a fall"—
Rare charity, vulgarity—
Both present at the sale.

Parted for ever the relics of years,
Carefully guarded, some watered by tears;
Linked with fond mem'ries of loved ones gone;
But to the crowd 'tis all one, all one,
Packing, cracking,
Hurrying and flurrying—
Such is the day of the sale.

THE PASSING BELL.

Yes, thou'rt knelling; sadly solemn
Come thy echoes through the dell,
Telling, as we hasten onward,
One more bids the world farewell.

Gently falling, as the sere leaf
From its parent bough must part,
So thy tones, so sad and dreary,
Fall upon the stricken heart.

Now the sable mourners scatter,
And the green turf's gently laid
O'er the spot where youth and beauty
Slumber with the quiet dead.

There the wintry blast will whistle
O'er its snowy covering cold;
There, perchance, will violets nestle
When sweet spring awakes the mould.

Summer suns will beam upon thee,
Night winds kiss the grassy sod
Where the pearly dews have gathered,
When thou'rt safe at home with God.

A FATHER GONE HOME.

I saw a grave near to the moss-grown wall,
Around the churchyard where the rank grass tall
Sweeps o'er the nameless tomb, or clambers by
The sculptured stone that records virtues high.
It was at dawn; the hoary sexton plied
The solemn work he soon must lay aside;
Spring, too, was dawning, and a lark above
Poured out her waking song, her lay of love.

I saw the upturned daisy meekly lie,
The black earth crushing its unopened eye;
I heard the spade and mattock rattling sound,
As deep he dug into the cold damp ground;
I saw the solemn hearse move from the door
Of him who ne'er shall cross its threshold more,
The mourners treading rev'rently and slow,
The weeping ones within o'erwhelm'd in woe.
It was a father left this desert land,
Its scattered pleasant spots, its shifting sands,
And safe through all he reached the happy goal,
While faith and love upheld his drooping soul.
I saw the turf closed o'er his narrow bed,
The tear affection and kind memory shed;
I saw mild Hope from the low dust arise;
And soar with sunny wing beyond the skies.
I watched a beaming star as evening crept
To don her robe of grey, and sunshine slept;
It quivered on amid the heaven's clear blue,
Bright o'er the myriads bursting into view.
And now pale midnight, in her tresses dark,
Stole gloomy on, as tempest haunts the bark;
Now moaning low, now muttering deep and loud,
As breathes the heart oppressed by sorrow's cloud.
What saw I in that dark and solemn hour,
When Nature seemed to sink beneath its power?
One lone star shining through the gathered gloom—
The star of Faith triumphant o'er the tomb.
I watched the first faint streak of daylight come—
I hailed the sight as traveller hails his home;
But saw not with my earth-beclouded eyes
Heaven's glorious visions on that father rise.
Methought that star had burst into a day
Of endless light—a never-failing ray
Of joy unspeakable: I knelt to pray
That they and I might find Heaven's true pathway.

DEN FINELLA.

I gazed adown a dizzy steep,
O'er which the merry waters leap,
O'er rocks where many flow'rets creep—
'Twas Den Finella.

The music of that water-fall,
I can its summer voice recall,
That sounded thro' the beeches tall
At Den Finella.

And where the trembling leaflets hung,
There many joyous warblers sung,

Where ivy-clad the archway sprung
O'er Den Finella.

Far down the winding waters trill,
In gentle stream or dancing rill ;
Or slumber in black depths so still
At Den Finella.

There many mossy, verdant shades,
And winding paths, 'neath green arcades
Of stately pines that never fade,
At Den Finella.

When dashing o'er the rocky height,
The torrent in its winter might,
A scene of terror, yet delight,
Is Den Finella.

Dear haunt of youth, I love ye well ;
Oft have thy beauties cast a spell
Which still in memory loves to dwell,
Dear Den Finella.

HUGH THOMSON,

AUTHOR of a volume entitled "Poems and Essays," was born at Rothesay in 1847. His father was a native of Bute, where he held a small farm, and his mother was a native of Tiree. The family removed from Rothesay to Glasgow while Hugh was yet a boy. He left school before he had acquired the art of writing, and it was at an evening class, while learning the trade of an iron moulder and by attending a Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society, that he acquired the most of his education. For several years the subject of our sketch has been well and favourably known as a letter-carrier in connection with the Post Office at Rothesay. His beautiful and very interesting volume was published in 1885. By

way of "preface" he tells the reader that he cannot say "whether there is much, little, or nothing in the volume, but shall just allow it to speak for itself, should it have the good fortune to be heard among the many voices that command attention." We think it will be appreciated by intelligent people. The prose sketches and essays are valuable from an historic, social, and moral point of view. They are thoughtful and elevating, and are expressed in neat and terse language, while his poetical productions evince tenderness and no little power of moving the feelings, as well as a shrewd insight into human nature.

SABBATH BELLS.

The Sabbath bells are ringing,
We love to hear their sound;
Good news, good news they're bringing—
They tell of hallowed ground,
Where worshippers are going
To offer praise and prayer;
Thus by their actions showing
This world's not all their care.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

The Sabbath bells are ringing,
They waft our souls above,
And each of them, while swinging,
Sound forth that God is love—
The ever-blessed story
Of His redeeming grace—
How Jesus veiled His glory
To meet our helpless case.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

The Sabbath bells are ringing,
Oh happy, happy thought,
That angels too are singing,
While rebels back are brought
To hear the gospel calling,
O'ercome by such great love;
Those rebels now are falling,
And saving mercy prove.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

The Sabbath bells are ringing,
Their music fills the air,

While faithful souls are winging
Their thoughts to God in prayer.
Their hearts with love are glowing,
As to His house they go,
Where mercy's stream is flowing,
A balm for every woe.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

The Sabbath bells are ringing,
Soon, soon their sounds shall cease,
But if by faith we're clinging,
We have a lasting peace ;
And soon we shall be swelling
The heavenly host above,
Our glory to be telling
Of God's redeeming love.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

While Sabbath bells are ringing,
While mercy lifts her voice,
And heavenly hopes now springing
Make faithful hearts rejoice,
Oh, let us hear the teaching
Those Sabbath bells do give—
They're earnestly beseeching
To hear, believe, and live.
Ring on, sweet bells, ring on.

MAN'S INSIGNIFICANCE.

When near the verge of the eternal world,
With tottering steps we stagger to the grave,
And all we hold most dear fades from our view,
And we ourselves will soon forgotten be ;
While the great globe moves on, as if we had
Not been ; becomes it then for us to swell
With pride, with not one moment we can call
Our own ? The ever-present flies with ceaseless
Wings, until what we call time melts in
Eternity. Oh, man ; vain, pompous man !
Who treads this world, to him so great, tho' but
A speck in vast creation. Is this he,
With philosophic scorn contemptuous,
That God's own Word rejects and glories in
The sparks of intellectual fire, the power
Of genius makes to fly at every stroke ?
Is this the creature who would dare presume
To sit in judgment on the act of Him
Who, by His Word alone, brought into
Being all those numerous orbs adorning

Space, and sent them on his errand to declare
His wondrous power? Oh, ye Angelic hosts,
Who scan with interest this lower world,
Intelligent beyond earth's wisest sons,
With what astonishment do ye behold
The outcome of proud, vain imaginings!
The scientific man of high renown,
Who deems himself well versed in nature's laws,
With what assurance does he theorise,
From lofty pedestal propounds his thoughts,
As if God's whole designs were known to him,
And nature's hidden forces he could trace—
Telling the why and wherefore of each fact,
While he himself, part of that wondrous whole,
Is to himself a living mystery.

FLORA.

I sing of thee, Flora, so lovely and fair,
No flower half so charming, no jewel so rare;
Thou art dearer to me than aught else beside,
O, tell me, dear Flora, wilt thou be my bride?
My station is humble, my name is unknown,
No high-sounding title I claim as mine own;
Yet still this great truth let no one ignore—
The highest of rank are those true at the core!

In this vain, busy world, though our lot be obscure,
Our lives may be noble, our hearts may be pure;
'Tis Virtue alone gives the truest of peace—
Her pleasures are pleasures that ever increase.
Then come, gentle Flora, come drink at this stream,
It is love's purest thought, it is man's noblest theme,
Our hearts thus united must ever prove true,
When Virtue, our guide, is in all that we do.

All things that are seen are subject to change—
They pass by as shadows fly out of our range;
But love, truth, and honour, the poorest may share,
To cheer when in sorrow, to drive away care;
For love shall remain, and truth shall delight,
Honour shall clothe us with raiment most bright;
If Fortune should smile, we receive her with grace,
And if she should frown, her worst we can face.

SUNSHINE.

Ho! the merry sunshine, the merry, merry sunshine,
It sheds its glory over all,
It cheers the hearts of great and small,

Its beams fall gently on us all—
The merry, merry sunshine.

Who does not love the sunshine, the merry, merry sunshine?
The flowers put on their best attire,
While we their lovely tints admire
The birds around form quite a choir
In merry, merry sunshine.

Then let us sing of sunshine, of health-renewing sunshine,
The flowing streams, the gurgling brooks,
And even curious shaded nooks,
Besides, the towering rugged rocks
Are lighted up by sunshine.

Yes, we love the sunshine, the ever-welcome sunshine,
Its glowing heat, its brilliant light,
Makes the cold darkness take its flight,
And, oh! good morning, what a sight
Of beauty is the sunshine.

Hurrah, hurrah for sunshine, the ever-pleasing sunshine—
All nature feels its wondrous power,
Yes, even in the falling shower,
We've seen a flood of glory pour
Through rain-clouds in the sunshine.

Then let us be like sunshine, the ever-smiling sunshine,
Let truth and love but guide our way,
For that make's life one summer day,
And when we come its debt to pay,
We'll set like glorious sunshine.

GEORGE SUTHERLAND,

ALTHOUGH born near Durham in 1866, was only a few months old when his parents removed to the neighbourhood of Berwick. He received a fair elementary education, and is at present employed in the coal trade at Berwick Station. Even when at school he attempted to clothe his thoughts in

verse, and for several years he has occasionally written thoughtful and pleasing descriptive pieces, and modest, yet faithful portraitures of every-day life which have appeared in "the poet's corner" of the local newspapers.

TO MY LYRE.

O, sweet companion of my lonely hours,
To thee my youthful heart with rapture clings;
For when despondency's dark storm-cloud lowers,
I find a solace in thy quiv'ring strings.

Although unblest with wild poetic fire,
Thine ill-tuned strings may pour the homely strain,
And though the Muse may scarce my soul inspire,
My trembling hand may wake thy chords again.

I crave not power to wear the honoured bays—
To touch the harp a worthier hand has strung—
I only ask to pour the homely lays,
And sing as humble bards before have sung.

Though in the forest shade the thrush may sing,
The sparrow, too, may chirp its simple note:
And so, while others sweep the classic string,
I'll wake thy chords to every passing thought.

THE PATH OF LIFE.

When first along life's rugged path youth bounds with footsteps light,
Far in the distant future Fancy's guiding star shines bright;
But, oh, how oft youth's led astray by Hope's alluring gleam—
How oft it finds that life is not a pleasant passing dream.

When manhood climbs the weary steep with firm and steady tread,
And views the awful present with dark clouds of care o'erhead,
How faintly through th' encircling mist Hope sheds her flick'ring rays,
To gild the stern reality that meets his longing gaze.

And when old age, with feeble step, is slowly toiling on,
When life's gay pleasures are no more—when every comfort's gone—
Then shall the brightest ray of Hope dispel the gath'ring gloom,
And light a new, a brighter path of life beyond the tomb.

SWEET MONTH OF FLOWERS.

Sweet month of flow'rs
And gentle show'rs,
Again with joy we greet thee;
Our thirsting earth
Now hails thy birth—
All Nature blooms to meet thee:
The warblers pour their gladsome strains
To welcome thy refreshing rains.

The flow'rets bloom—
Their sweet perfume
The gentle breeze is bearing;
The rippling brook
A brighter look
Along its course is wearing:
O, April on our thirsty plains
Pour down thy sweet, refreshing rains.

As o'er the land
Thy fairy wand
With silent flight is sweeping;
In field and tree,
In wood and lea,
In every flow'ret peeping,
We see the hand that now ordains
Thy sunshine and refreshing rains.

BERWICK BRAES.

When summer sunlight gilds the land,
When skies are deepest blue;
When flow'rets don their brightest robes,
And fields their greenest hue,
I love to wander where I roved
In childhood's happy days,
And view again each lovely spot
Along our Berwick Braes.

Although decay's rude hand may mark
The scenes where beauty reigns,
Unaltered are those dear-loved haunts—
Their grandeur still remains.
There Nature wears her fairest smile,
And in her myriad ways
She decks in gayest loveliness
Our native Berwick Braes.

The snowy sheets of daisies lie
In wild profusion spread,
And far down on the shelving rocks
The primrose lifts its head;
While high o'erhead the warbling birds
Pour forth their songs of praise,
And loud and clear the music rings
Along our Berwick Braes.

Along each path in youth I've traced
My steps with lightsome glee,
To watch the changing wavelets roll
Far o'er the sunlit sea;
And often did the pleasant dreams
Of future meet my gaze,
When wand'ring o'er the velvet sward
Along our Berwick Braes.

Let Scotia boast her mountains wild,
Her glens and heath-clad hills;
Her lonely moors and sheltered vales,
Where dance the sparkling rills;
Fit themes are they for minstrel's songs,
And heaven-born poets' lay;
But, while they sing their Highland "bens,"
I'll sing our Berwick Braes.

REV. WILLIAM M. PHILIP,

MINISTER of the parish of Skene, Aberdeenshire, is the author of several excellent stories, illustrating Scottish life and character. But as he is also the author of a number of metrical tales, modern ballads, and tender lyrics, he is entitled to a place in this work. His father, who was a schoolmaster in Portsoy, Banffshire, was a man of extensive information, and of very intellectual tastes. He died at Leith, in the house of a married daughter, in 1879, at the ripe age of 87. "Though in his day," said the *Aberdeen Journal* at the time of his death, "the emoluments of schoolmasters were small compared

with what they now are, he brought up well a large family, two or more of whom are merchants in Cape Town, while two of his younger sons are respected ministers of the Established Church, and one is a minister of the Congregational body." At the age of fourteen, the subject of our sketch was put into the office of a local solicitor, in order that he might acquire a "business hand." After spending three years at the desk, he started for Edinburgh, in the hope of getting a situation in a law office, and in the course of a few weeks he obtained the privilege of copying papers in the office of a W.S. He drudged away for about five years on a three-legged stool, earning 2s 5½d for a day of ten hours. In his twenty-second year he returned home, and began to study with the view of attending the University and qualifying himself for the Church. At the University he gained over many competitors the prize for the best translation into English verse of a portion of Virgil, and in Logic and Moral Philosophy took a high place in the prize list. On finishing the Arts classes he was appointed teacher of the Parish School of Forglen. He held this office until he was licensed as a preacher. His first appointment was as a missionary assistant in the South, which position he held for eighteen months. He next resolved to go into the colonial field, and soon received an appointment from the Committee as minister of St Paul's Church, Truro, Nova Scotia. There, with full heart and will, he worked for two years and a half, and his labours were greatly appreciated by a very attached people; but the place was unhealthy, and he was not disappointed when he received a call to become minister of St John's Church, Stellarton, county of Pictor. Here, too, he and Mrs Philip were held in much esteem, and after nearly four years' labour he induced his congregation to build an additional church three miles distant, where a village was rapidly

growing. They honoured our poet by giving the church the name of "St Philip's."

Seven happy years were thus spent in Nova Scotia, until, in 1870, he was presented to the parish of Skene by the Earl of Fife. They parted with their friends on the other side of the Atlantic with sincere regret, but it was pleasing to return home to be in the midst of those who were still nearer and dearer to them. Six years after his settlement in Skene, Mr Philip received pressing invitations to return to Truro, which had grown a large town in the interval. But although offered greatly increased emoluments, he preferred to spend the remainder of his days in the "Sweet Fatherland."

In 1872 Mr Philip published a tale, entitled "It'l a' come Richt" (Aberdeen: John Adams). This was followed, in 1882, by another Scottish story—"Kirsty Macintosh's Scholars." These furnish delightful pictures of the life and manners of the working people of Aberdeenshire, and they have enjoyed wide popularity. Greatly as he loves the Muse, he says that he has only been able to enjoy "stolen glances from her amid the graver duties of his calling, but those glances have often lighted up the heart, and added a genial glow to life, and a beauty to all things around me." He has written several excellent metrical tales of Scottish life and character. These are exceedingly amusing and strikingly realistic, while the specimens we give of his shorter pieces show that he can make good use of the couthy Doric, and that he is ever felicitous both in thought and expression.

THE MISER.

'Mid the musty smells from the grimy walls,
Which the rotting damps consume ;
Where the spider hangeth his dim, grey palls,
And a struggling sunbeam faintly falls
Athwart the desolate room ;

The miser sits in his miserly care,
Counting his gathering gain ;
His cheeks are haggardly lean, and bare,
And his eyes have a weird and hungry stare—
A gleam of a charnel pane.

A cruel Master Mammon is writ ;
For fifty winters and more
He has made a hack of this soul, and yet
He bridles him fast with a golden bit,
And galls him sharply and sore.

He promised him gold and land to his will,
And the balm of love and rest ;
But the wretch in rags is shivering still,
And his flesh is picked with the vulture's bill
That ravens within his breast.

Poor dotard ! that living temple divine
Why have ye profanëd, say ?
Why given the key to a foe malign,
Who has stolen the gold from the inmost shrine,
And left but the useless clay ?

Ah me, but the spirit of beauty brings
To this soul no gracious thought ;
In the zone of heaven, tho' the sky-lark sings,
And earth hath a thousand glorious things,
He knows or he heeds it not.

O, never a human feeling is his
To brighten his fading years ;
No dutiful wife to cherish and bless ;
No children's children to fondle and kiss
In a tender joy of tears.

Ever alone by a silent hearth-stone
Sits Mammon's captive and slave ;
Brooding in gloom o'er the glittering dust,
Like a ghost that haunts its mouldering crust,
And hugs the spoil of the grave.

A SAILOR'S GOLDEN WEDDING.

HUSBAND.

Come, sit ye doon beside me, Ann, my Annie kind and leal,
This is our golden wedding day, and we are spared and weel ;
And we are spared and weel, lassie, tho' age maun hae its way,
And live to bliss the sun that shines upon us baith this day.

Tho' fifty years hae come and gane sin' ye were made my bride,
Ye're still to me the same, Annie, as in that morning-tide;
The same, but wi' a safter grace upon your snaw-wreathed broo,
For ye are nearer Heaven, Annie, and I am nearer you.

Ah! weel I mind that joyfu' day we twa stood up thegither,
And, hand-in-hand, wi' lowin' hearts made vows wi' ane anither;
And nobly ye hae kept the vows your lips sae faintly told,
And turned the blossom into fruit, the silver into gold:
Thro' a' the years that we have seen your love has glowed the same—
My star-light on the lonely sea, my sunlight when at hame.

WIFE.

I'll sit me doon beside you, John, I'll lay my loof in thine,
And bless the day we twa did meet, the hour that made ye mine;
For ye've been good and true, John, and wi' a heart o' strength,
Ye focht the battle for us a', and gained the day at length.

In perils and in hardships sair, far on the stormy seas,
Ye toiled to win the bairnies' bread, and mak' the ingle bleeze;
When gusty winds blew loud and strong frae darkness until licht,
My heart has trembled for your sake thro' a' the waukrife nicht.

'Twas yours to dare wi' manly pith whaur fainter hearts would fail,
'Twas mine to pray to Him that hears to keep you safe and hale;
'Twas yours to pleugh the distant main, and hame the harvest bring,
'Twas mine to dole the precious store, and save a seed for spring.

And Providence was kind and good, and as the years wore by,
Our bonnie bairnies round us grew, and filled our hearts wi' joy;
We had our sorrows—they were sent by the Divine Adviser,
To lead us aftener to our knees, and mak' our hearts the wiser.

Sae let us thank Him we are spared to sit by ane anither,
To tell the tale o' fifty years o' wedded life thegither;
To see our bairns and bairnies' bairns around us full a score,
A' bricht and brave to run the race that we have run before.

May He that rules the spheres abune, and keeps them burnin bricht,
That tents the gowan in the field, and faulds its e'e at nicht—
May He their varied lives direct, and mak' them a' his ain,
So we may meet some happier day, and never part again.

TO MARY.

Thou first and fairest gift of heaven,
The pearl and prize of life to me,
All blessings which to earth are given
Are treasured up, my wife, in thee.

O, perfect flower of womanhood,
In thee all virtues bear a part—
Serene resolve and fortitude,
And gentle wisdom of the heart;

And meekness of the heavenly dove,
Which turns to good intended wrong,
And quenches with the breath of love,
The fiery darts of envious tongue.

A healthy soul, most fresh and sweet,
Round which no sickly fancies twine;
Whose natural pulses grandly beat
In measure with the law divine.

At peace with heaven, at peace with earth,
Her spirit knows no fretful fear,
But spreads its snowy blossoms forth,
And makes perpetual spring-time here.

The life we bear, tho' linked to place,
Hath breathings wonderful and strange,
And all the circling realms of space
Do seem too narrow for its range.

This love, dear soul, shall never die:
These earthly shells shall drop away,
And, hid in dusty darkness, lie
Till clay hath mouldered back to clay;

But this high love shall prosper well,
And spread its wings with new delight
Above the dark and ruined cell,
Where it was slowly formed for flight.

AN EPISTLE TO SPRING.

Oh, "gentle Spring," as ye are often styled
By idle poets wha have little skill,

I'm apt to think that, like a petted child,
In temper ye are waxin' dour and ill;
I've lookit lang, fine Miss, in vain to see you
Mak' gude the soundin' titles that they gie you.

Ye cam' upon us sooner than we wantit,
And smiled a wee, but soon began to flyte;
And ever since ye've been like ane dementit,
And glumched and gloomed and grat wi' verra spite;
There's some in doubts if ye're the bonnie queen
That poets sang, and aulder folks have seen.

They speak aboot your sweet and blythesome smile—
I never see a guid look in your face;
They rave aboot your breath, sae "saft" the while—
It's plain they've never met you in this place:
My verra nose was nippit red and blue
Last nicht I daundered doon the burn wi' you.

My banes are sair, my voice is like the timmer,
My shrinkin' shanks are shakin', faint and weak;
And this is a' your doin', Hielan' kimmer,
And eke to monie mair if they wad speak;
Your blust'rin' freen' acts never sae malignly;
He comes gey rude, but leaves us aye maist kindly.

Your prinkit weans by burn and brae and grove
Cam' peepin' oot, your early face to see;
Ye touched them wi' ae gowden gleam o' love,
And, infant-like, they smiled wi' bonnie glee;
Then ye forsook them in an angry fume,
And their wee cradles next became their tomb.

The birdies thocht they spied you in the West,
Hangin' your silken curtains o'er the seas;
They socht you whaur they like to find you best—
Walkin' in love-dreams thro' the buddin' trees;
And sweetly did they sing wi' heartsome cheer,
And soun' your praises oot on every ear.

Ye cheated them; for in your fretfu' ire
Yet set upon them like your surly brither,
And sent them shiv'rin' aff to stack and byre,
Their beatin' breasties in an unco swither;
Wee robin, wha had gane some days before,
Cam' back, puir thing, and tootled at our door.

O, think upon your ways, and dinna spoil
The ancient fame ye won for grace and truth—
Throw aff thae dumps, and gie's a bonnie smile,
And touch us wi' the kisses o' your mouth;

Ten thousand minstrels wait deep thanks to pay,
And sing your praises a' the lee-lang day.

I think I see you comin' thro' the sky,
Cushioned upon a cloud o' silver sheen;
The heavens tak' glory frae your beamin' eye,
The earth puts on a dress o' brightest green;
The forests nod, the brooks in chorus sing—
"Welcome to Nature, welcome, blessed Spring!"

WILLIAM WALKER,

ONE of the most musical and racy of our present-day "Temperance Poets," is a native of the county of Perth—the county that produced Lady Nairne, Charles Mackay, Robert Nicoll, and other well-known Scottish poets. For the particulars we give of Mr Walker's career, we are indebted to the author of the very interesting sketches at present appearing in the columns of the *League Journal*, entitled "Temperance Poets and Poetry." In 1845 he proceeded to Glasgow, where he very soon interested himself in temperance work. A few years afterwards he contributed a series of pieces to the *Temperance Review*, entitled "Black Bottle Lyrics;" and to the *Commonwealth*, under the soubriquet of "Sandy M'Alpine, he "discoorsed" in clear, racy, and humorous "braid Scotch" on social and temperance subjects. A selection of these, his "Cannelriggs' Reflections," were afterwards printed in book form; and, as the little book is now out of print, we trust the genial and talented author will consent to bring out "a new and enlarged edition." The sketches contain much fine quiet humour, and in a pawky and telling manner, convey many an important lesson. Indeed, we think they compare favourably with

some of the productions of Dr John Brown, James Smith, or "Sandy Mackay" and his "Schule Brod."

In 1875 Mr Walker's business, and his connection with Ceylon, led him to take up his residence in London. The change gave a fresh impulse to his energies, and a wider field for their direction and exercise. He became a member of Committee of the National Temperance League, and in that Committee he laboured conjunctly with his old friend, Mr Robert Rae, Secretary of the League. In the "Handbook of Temperance History," published by the League, he contributed a chapter on "The Early History of the Temperance Reformation in Scotland," said to be one of the best written chapters in the work. Mr Walker had repeatedly occasion to travel to and from Ceylon, and on these occasions he wrote "Notes from the East." These bore the signature of "W. W.," and were much appreciated by the readers of the *League Journal*, the *Record*, and other temperance periodicals. It was on the occasion of one of these journeys that he wrote "Far Owre the Sea" and "Gaun Hame." These, under the common title of "The Traveller's Songs," have recently been published, and, with music, symphonies and accompaniments, may be had of Messrs J. & R. Parlane, Paisley.

On the death of Mr Thomas Knox, Edinburgh (who has a place in this volume), Mr Walker edited a fine edition of temperance lyrics written by his friend and fellow-poet. The volume, entitled "Scottish Temperance Songs to Scottish Airs," is excellently arranged for part-singing, with pianoforte accompaniments, by Mr James Merrylees. It has also an introductory notice from the pen of Mr Walker, and is published by the Messrs Parlane of Paisley.

Mr Walker has once more settled in the neighbourhood of Glasgow; and, like "Old Harp," the editor of the *League Journal* sketches, we wish

that he "may be long spared to labour by pen, and voice, and song for the promotion of the temperance cause." He possesses in no small degree the gift of lyric song. His verses are finely conceived, and well wrought out; and, while evincing keen imaginative faculty, they are well calculated to touch the finer chords and the deepest feelings of our nature.

FAR OWRE THE SEA.

Far owre the sea the boatie rows
  Far frae my hame, far owre the sea ;
And as it rows, aye langer grows
  The road atween my hame an' me.
For I hae walth o' love at hame,
  A wife and bonnie bairnies three ;
And oh ! to pairt, it breaks my heart,
  When I maun gang far owre the sea.
    Far owre the sea the boatie rows,
      Far frae my hame, far owre the sea ;
    And as it rows, aye langer grows
      The road atween my hame an' me

Oh cruel sea ! rough rowin' deep,
  That ruthless sunders mine an' me ;
Thy waves sae blue but mock my rue—
  Hoo can I gang far owre the sea ?
    Far owre the sea the boatie rows,
      Far frae my hame, far owre the sea ;
    And as it rows, aye langer grows
      The road atween my hame an' me.

But far or near, on sea or land,
  God keeps us a' whaure'er we be ;
I rest me here ; I canna fear ;
  He guides my steps far owre the sea.
    Far owre the sea the boatie rows,
      Far frae my hame, far owre the sea ;
    And as it rows, aye stronger grows
      The tie that binds my hame to me.

Oh kindly sea ! far-stretchin' wave,
  That grandly mak's a path for me ;
God's ain great road, sae lang, sae broad—
  Wha wudna gang far owre the sea ?
    Far owre the sea the boatie rows,
      Far frae my hame, far owre the sea ;
    And as it rows, aye stronger grows
      The love that hallows hame to me.

Oh love! Heav'n's "guid an' perfect gift,"
The heart's true hame for big an' wee;
It brings us rest and a' things blest,
And gangs wi' me far owre the sea.
Far owre the sea the boatie rows,
Far frae my hame, far owre the sea;
And as it rows, aye stronger grows
The love that hallows hame to me.

For love is like the sea itsel',
It girds us roun' whaure'er we be;
It blesses them that bide at hame,
An' sends me singin' owre the sea!
Still owre the sea the boatie rows,
Far frae my hame, far owre the sea;
But far or near, at hame or here,
It's love that hallows hame to me.

GAUN HAME.

My heart gangs dancin' o'er the sea,
For I'm gaun hame, for I'm gaun hame;
An' merrily dance the waves wi' me,
For I'm gaun hame, gaun hame.
I've wandered lang and far awa',
'Mang bonnie scenes an' hooses braw,
But ne'er could see amang them a'
A place to ca' my hame.
My heart gangs dancin' owre the sea,
For I'm gaun hame, for I'm gaun hame;
An' merrily dance the waves wi' me,
For I'm gaun hame, gaun hame.

In a cosy nook in the auld countrie,
My wifie bides wi' our bairnies three,
An' weel I ken they're prayin' for me
When I am far frae hame.
So my heart gangs dancin' owre the sea,
For I'm gaun hame, for I'm gaun hame;
An' whaur my wifie an' bairnies be,
O that's my hame, my hame.

Nae warldly gear that e'er I kent
Can fill the heart wi' sweet content;
But heavenly love to earth was lent
To hallow earthly hame.
An' my heart gangs dancin' owre the sea,
For I'm gaun hame, for I'm gaun hame;
An' its love that plays the melodie,
When I gang dancin' hame.

O love, it lichtens darksome care,
An' love, it sweetens hamely fare,
An' love, it heals the heart that's sair
Wi' weary thochts o' hame.
My heart gangs dancin' owre the sea,
For I'm gaun hame, for I'm gaun hame ;
An' wife an' bairns will dance wi' me,
When I gang hame, gang hame.

O earthly hame ! sae sweet to me,
Hoo dear the heav'nly hame maun be,
When, earth's sad partin's owre, we'll see
God's wanderers a' gaun hame !
Frae hill an' dale, frae land an' sea,
We'll a' gang hame, we'll a' gang hame,
And angels' sangs our welcome be,
When we gang hame, gang hame.

A LAMENT.—November, 1879.

"When I went abroad last year things were looking very black at home, and, like another auld Jeremiah, I was disposed to sigh and cry over the desolations of our country, and the wicked and reckless tricks of our Government. When in that mood I wrote the 'Lament.'"—*Extract from letter to a friend in May, 1880* :—

We ance had a name, 'twas oor joy an' oor pride,
It was bricht wi' a glory that naething could hide ;
We were strong on the land, we were safe on the sea,
And oor sodgers an' sailors were brave as could be ;
For we focht for the richt, an' we focht wi' brave foes—
They were men like oorsel's, and could gie back oor blows ;
An' we focht them, an' thresh'd them, an' did it like men,
But "mony strange things have happen'd since then."

Noo oor foes are puir savages, cled wi' dark skins,
Wha ne'er did us wrang ; but it's ane o' their sins
That they like their ain country an' fecht for their hame,
An' it's no for a Scotchman to say they're to blame !
We gie them cauld lead when they plead for dear life,
An' when mercy they cry for, we gie them "the knife ;"
Ay, certes, we *ance* did oor fechtin' like men,
But "mony strange things have happen'd since then."

We ance had for Statesmen men prood o' oor name ;
They broaden'd oor freedom, an' guairded oor fame ;
They were loyal an' leal ; they were honest as day ;
It was *noblesse oblige* wi' them, cost what it may !
They were true to the Commons, an' true to the Croon ;
They said *fiat justitia*, tho' heav'n should come doon !
They were fearless but fair in the auld-fashion'd days ;
They didna tell lees—they had nae crookit ways ;

For oor nobles were gentles, oor Statesmen grand men ;
But "mony strange things have happen'd since then."

Oh, foul fa' the man that has wrocht sic a change,
An' the men that gang wi' 'im in ways that are strange,
Wi' his tricks an' his treaties a' made in the dark—
It's no for oor country to bide wi' sic wark.
It's truth that stands langest—it aye stands the test—
An' the auld honest policy's simplest an' best.
We maun try simpler ways—we maun hae better men ;
We maun strive to get back oor auld guid name again ;
But "mony strange things" maun happen ere then !

DINNA GI'E HER DRINK, MY LADDIE.

Dinna gi'e her drink, my laddie,
Gin your love be true ;
Dinna gi'e her drink, my laddie,
Gin she's true to you.
And dinna ask her gin she likes it—
Troth, she daurna tell !
The day may come when, wi' sair heart,
Ye'll answer that yersel' !
Dinna gi'e her drink, my laddie, etc.

The day may come—it may be near—
She'll aiblins be your wife ;
She'll aiblins mak' some hoose *your* hame,
An' gi'e your bairnies life.
Then, oh ! gin ye wad lo'e yer wife,
An' keep her pure an' fair,
An' bless your hame, and bless your bairns,
Oh, gi'e her drink nae mair.
Dinna gi'e her drink, my laddie, etc.

But gin ye'd wither a' her love,
An' burn her heart awa',
An' gin ye'd curse your blythesome hame,
An' bonny bairns an' a',
An' when sic waefu' wark was wrocht,
Gin ye wad wish to think
That your ain hand the deed had done,
Then gi'e her, gi'e her drink.
But *dinna* gi'e her drink, my laddie, etc.

Oh, tak' her to your bosom's love,
An' shield an' guard her well,
An' try to keep her pure in heart
By being pure yersel'.
Gi'e her your manhood's heart, that ne'er

From duty's hour would shrink ;
Gi'e her your love, your life, your all,
But dinna gi'e her drink.
Oh, dinna gi'e her drink, my laddie, etc.

WALTER WATT,

AUTHOR of the well-known and popular reading entitled "The Bridal o' the Robins," was born in Edinburgh in 1826—the "year o' the short corn." In his youth he received very little education—indeed, as a proof of his early difficulties and struggles, we are informed that he learned to write after getting married. At the age of seven he began to serve an apprenticeship to the tobacco trade. At an evening school, upheld by his employers, he was taught the elements of education. This he followed up by systematic study and self-training—reading with avidity all the works in history, philosophy, science, and poetry he could lay his hands on. By this time he had removed from his native town to Bathgate, and had become secretary to several clubs and societies, as well as a correspondent for the local press. About this period, also, several chosen spirits conceived the idea of starting a newspaper on Liberal principles, and our poet had the honour of writing the first "leader." A selection of his lucubrations, under the title of "Sketches in Prose and Poetry," was published in 1881. The volume contained a number of poems, articles, and literary papers that he had contributed to newspapers and magazines. Many of the poems are sweet, natural, and full of tenderness. We regret to learn from our friend, Mr Robert Ford, author of the "Poet's Album," &c.,

that the work is not so well-known as its merits deserve. Mr Watt is now resident in Pollokshields, and employs his leisure hours in constructing fiddles, in which he, although self-taught, is very accomplished—some of his violins, we understand, having been valued as high as £50. Speaking of the origin of his "Twa Robins," Mr Watt informs us that he considers that it would greatly enhance the interest of poetic compositions were the writers to give a short sketch, or some details of the incident or circumstances which lead to their ideas, or particular train of thought. It would be the means of stimulating many minds to cultivate an acquaintance with the Muses who otherwise pass them idly by, and show to the careless and indifferent the vast resources that surround them for poetic theme, not only in Nature's great arcana, but in the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, and the feelings, passions, and sentiments which agitate the human mind. "I was walking lately along the Kilmarnock Road," says our poet—"the same road that Burns travelled when coming to publish his first Edinburgh edition. It was in the evening; the bright warm sun shone out beautifully, and reflected on the rich and varied tints of the distant woods, which gave evidence that autumn was already preparing to wrap up Nature in wintry sleep. In passing a hedge skirting a plantation a little cock robin flew up, and perching himself on a branch just at my side, he warbled forth his sweet, musical carol. I was so much struck with the boldness and appearance of the pretty bird that I stood to listen to his song, and admire his beautiful plumage. He fixed on me an enquiring look, as much as to say—'How dare you intrude on my privacy?' I am sure if he had known my intentions towards him he would have invited me to visit his little crib, and have introduced me to his family; but our medium of conversation being of such a limited

character, he flew off, and I walked on, so much impressed with the interview that I have been induced to record the incident in the following manner" :—

THE BRIDAL O' THE ROBINS.

A Robin Redbreist sat on a spray
  Wi' an e'e like a diamond sae bricht,
And he whussled an' sang i' the morning grey,
  And he dune the same at nicht.

An' aye as he sang he lookit aboot
  To see that nae ane gaed by,
An' then he sang oot anither toot,
  Till ye'd thocht his throat was dry.

Ae day he sat on his wavin' perch,
  'Neath a bonnie clear blue sky,
A wee bird, twittering on the search
  O' ane like itsel', flew by.

An' it lichtit doon on a silken bough
  O' the bonnie birken tree,
And it cockit its tail and dookit its pow,
  Just as blythe as a bird could be.

An' wha are ye, my bonnie wee bird?
  Ha'e ye come here to tarry?
For if to you I pledge my word,
  Wad ye consent to marry?

Quo' she, I've come frae yon green shaw,
  Whar the gowans and buttercups grow,
To see my braw Robin, an' stay in his ha',
  For love's set my heart in a lowe.

Gude bless my life! what's that ye say?
  Are ye really speakin' true?
It's lang ago, an' mony a day
  Since first I heard o' you.

An' he happit up upon the twig
  Whar she was sittin' sae fain,
An' wow but his wee heart was big,
  An' fu' o' love's sweet pain.

An' he press'd her to his bonnie red breist,
  An' he happit her owre wi' his wing;

An' they nebbit thegither nine times at least;
O! wha wadna dune the same thing?

Then he plichted his troth, an' a sang he sung
O' love an' truth, in words
That ne'er was kent to human tongue,
But just to thae wee birds.

An' the twa were tied in a holy band
By nature's sov'reign law;
Love was the priest to gie command,
An' joined them heart an' a'.

Then frae each grove an' greenwood tree
The feather'd minstrel train
Sic an anthem sang o' love an' glee
As we ne'er may hear again.

An' the chorus it rang through the clear, fresh air,
Owre the meadow, the stream, an' the glen,
An' mony guid wushes were wussed to the pair
When Robin was wed to his Jenn.

Awa doon by yon bank, whaur the clear burnie rows,
As it wanders awa' to the sea,
Whar the wee lammies whud owre the bonnie green knowes,
An' flow'rs tempt the wild hinny bee.

It's there in a corner, secluded and snug,
An' hid frae a' merciless thieves,
They've biggit a nest oot o' feathers an' fog,
An' there hings owre't a branch o' green leaves.

An' there's five bonnie birdies sit in the wee fauld,
Wi' nae fear o' danger or harm;
An' whenever they cheep oot wi' hunger or cauld,
Robin stiffs their wee gebbs wi' a worm.

Nae art or temptation can win Robin's heart,
Frae his humble but happy estate;
An' there's naething but death in this world can part
The loves o' wee Rab an' his mate.

Then learn this lesson, ye that ca' yersel's men,
Who ne'er feel frae conscience a stang;
For constant affection, tak' Rab an' his Jenn
As yer guide, and ye'll never gang wrang.

CURLING SONG.

AIR.—"Mason's Apron."

Let topers sing, an' rant an' ring,
An' ca' the ither gill, man;
Let gluttons gourmandize an' feast
Until their wames are full, man;
While auld wives, hoastin' owre the fire,
Are wishin' for a thaw, man,
Gi'e me the reign o' winter's king,
Wi' guid clear frost an' snaw, man.

Chorus—Then, curlers, hurrah! curlers, hurrah!
For Johnnie Frost an' Scotia's game—
The curlers' roarin' play.

Oor manly art inspires the heart
To deeds o' great renown, man;
It gars the doited cuif look smart,
An' mak's a hero o' the clown, man.
It gars the crimson stream run free—
Renews oor tak' o' life, man;
An' cankert care is forced to flee
Frae the field o' friendly strife, man.

Though age sae auld may mak' us bauld,
When on the ice we're bricks, man;
An', though coming doon the hill o' life,
Can gie ony squad their licks, man.
Wi' burly stanes an' guid broom kowes,
An' hearts as true as steel, man,
Oor voices echo owre the knowes
Wi' a shout wad fricht the deil, man.

Nae summer morn wi' flowers adorn
The curlers' grassy plain, man;
Nae laverock flicherin' frae the lift
Pours doon his meltin' strain, man.
But owre the pearl encrusted stage
We drive oor stanes alang man,
While the Robin Redbreist frae the hedge
Rings oot his curlin' sang, man.

The potentate, in pomp an' state,
His honour we despise, man;
He kens nae joy that's half sae great
As the curler wi' his prize, man.
His bauble croon, he'd gi'd the slip,
Leave victory in the fray, man,
For the dignity o' bein' a skip,
An' win a parish play, man.

Then let us pass the social glass
To curlers' bairns sae brave, man;
Nae foreign loon shall e'er surpass
Their sons by field or wave, man.
In deadly breach or on the rink
Their courage ne'er can fail, man;
An' wi' a drap o' guid Scotch drink,
They'll gar their foes turn tail, man.

JAMES BEVERIDGE, F.E.I.S.,

EDITOR of "The Poets of Clackmannanshire," and author of several educational and other works, was born at Tullibody, an ancient village in the Western Division of Clackmannanshire. This village contains a church built by David I., "the sair saunt," which is in excellent preservation, and is used weekly for worship by the minister of the parish of Alloa. It served as one of the outlying posts of the ecclesiastical establishment of Cambuskenneth Abbey, near Stirling.

At the age of thirteen Mr Beveridge became a pupil teacher in his native village. He made rapid progress, and soon became familiar with the theory and practice of teaching. At the termination of his apprenticeship he was appointed to a situation in Blantyre Works' School, but wishing to avail himself of a course of instruction in the Normal Training School he competed for a scholarship, which he obtained, and subsequently removed to Glasgow. He was a distinguished student at the Glasgow Established Church Training College, and after occupying several important positions as a teacher, he, in 1876, received the appointment of Headmaster and Master of Method in the Church of Scotland Normal School,

Glasgow. Here he continues to prove that he is not only an accomplished, but a naturally gifted teacher.

Amongst the educational works published by Mr Beveridge are "The Midsummer Papers" for candidates for admission to Training Colleges, and a "Guide Book for Pupil Teachers" (Edinburgh, W. & R. Chambers). The former has had a very large sale, and the other, though only lately published, has already become popular. In addition to several minor works, our author has, as already stated, published a very interesting and finely illustrated book entitled "The Poets of Clackmannanshire," a work showing vast research as well as high mental culture, and to which we are indebted for the particulars of several of the poets in our present volume. From this book we give the following selection from Mr Beveridge's pen, evincing that, in addition to his being an accomplished scholar, he is also entitled to a place amongst "our poets."

ODE TO THE SEA.

Oh, how I love the sea, the sea,
The wild, untamed, and joyous sea;
For it has always seemed to me,
A portion of my infancy.

I sigh so much to see again
The snowy glister of its mane;
To feel the heaving billows glide
Beneath me as I breast its tide.

I long to lie upon thy shore,
And list thee on the breakers roar;
Or gaze upon thy glassy breast,
When winds and thee are lull'd to rest.

'Twas thus I knew thee when at first
Me at her breast my mother nurs'd;
When thy soft billows brought me sleep,
Hush'd in the cradle of the deep.

My birthplace was the sea;
Its waters are a lullaby to me,

Which in my ears is ever ringing
Like ocean far in sea-shell singing.

The first faint glimpse I caught of thee
Is like my visions of eternity—
Boundless expanse, and ever-varying light,
And golden gleams sent from the heaven so bright.

Thou art the bearer of all priceless things—
Thy duty thou dost pay alone to King of Kings;
Armadas thou dost bear to peace and rest,
Or break'st in pieces small at His behest.

Thou art so glorious when thou art clad
In light of setting suns—thou seem'st so glad—
That I could stand and watch thy laughing waves
For ever e'en to where the sunset braves.

Thy dread and awful void beyond
Hasting to fathomless profound—
Yet leaving to thee beams of light,
To guide thee to his home so bright.

So when I come, in age, or prime,
To stand upon the shore of Time,
May rays of light from Jesus come
To lead me to my Father's home.

HE WAS THERE.

(Translated from the French).

Nature to me seemed clad in softest sheen,
  And lur'd me on to tread her shady bowers;
I loved the richness of her meads so green,
  And gazed with rapture on her op'ning flowers.
I strayed by glassy brook, through darkling grove,
  While thousand flow'ry perfumes filled the air,
And feathery songsters poured forth songs of love:
  Enchantment walked around me—He was there.

I push away those pleasures with a sigh,
  That in the days gone by have charmed me so;
The sound of crystal stream afar I fly,
  And sombre shade cast by the leafy bough.
The rose I planted, and he oft caressed,
  Is all untended by my watchful care;
Forlorn I wander with dark fears oppressed;
  Nought ere delights me—He is no more there.

Again shall Nature wear her glorious robes,
And my heart thrill as with first pulse of love;
The azure sky shall tell of depthless hopes,
And zephyrs fan the olive-messaged dove.
My voice shall cause the linnet to be mute—
Blissful shall be the message it shall bear;
The hands down drop that skillf'lly touch the lute:
All shall delight me—if He's only there.

THE PLAYER AND THE LISTENER.

A player sat at an organ grand,
And as he played with foot and hand,
Tides of solemn thoughts swept o'er me,
And visions as by magic wand
Coursed through my brain and before my eyes;
Visions of earth, of sea, of skies,
While rousing fugue so wildly flies, and sadly sighing melodies.

FIRST VISION.

Glorious the scene that met my gaze,
As the sun arose with level rays,
And bathed in beauty flood and field;
All nature woke to songs of praise—
The varied songsters far and near
Trilled forth their hymn with full voice clear,
From grove and wood, and stately tree—the rousing chorus still I hear.

SECOND VISION.

The player played, and there came to me,
A sound like the waves of the foaming sea,
Tumbling, boiling, heaving in wrath,
As if nought on its bosom safe could be;
And the wind went moaning and sighing past,
As if to tell of the coming blast
That should tear from his height the giant oak, and the gallant ship from her moorings fast.

THIRD VISION.

Methought I stood by the lone seashore,
The winds and sea had hushed their roar,
And a ripple smooth scarce moved the sand,
While parting with the zephyr it bore.
The sun was setting in beauteous light,
Flooding all with his radiance bright;
A heavenly calmness stilled my soul, like the holy quiet of a starry night.

FOURTH VISION.

Still he played on, and hope arose,
As summer day in brightness grows,
From motley dawn and radiant cloud,
Till shining of the midday glows.
Sorrowful partings—trumpets sound—
The warhorse thunders o'er the ground—
The cannons boom—the battle's won—what gallant breasts
beneath that mound.

FIFTH VISION.

The player lightly touched the keys—
Lovers whisp'ring under the trees,
Their earnest, eloquent faces we see,
As they tell each other what will please.
Children's merry voices singing,
Laughter through the woodlands ringing,
All these the player played to me, and raised such scenes before
me springing.

REV. DAVID R. WILLIAMSON

WAS characterised by the late George Gilfillan as "one of the most gifted of our Scottish poets." He is well-known as a popular contributor of elegant prose and verse to several of the leading magazines and periodicals, and is junior minister of the large and populous parish of Kirkmaiden, Wigtonshire—a parish which, under the more poetical name of "Mardonkirk," Robert Burns has immortalised in one of his songs. Mr Williamson was born in the manse of Kirkmaiden in 1855. The manse is exquisitely situated, being surrounded with trees, from which it looks out upon the noble estuary of the Bay of Luce, and commands a splendid prospect of the Minnigaff mountains, which bound the horizon. In a sketch, entitled "Views from Kirkmaiden,"

Mr Williamson says:—"Here, indeed, are no world-renowned lakes, cloud-reaching mountains or roaring cataracts, as in the Highlands; no splendid castles, no beauteous rivers, no richly-wooded valleys, and no glens of surpassing grandeur and beauty, as in the parishes of Berwickshire and Dumfriesshire; in Kirkmaiden are no commanding citadels, towering monuments and spires, or wonders of art, as in those of Edinburgh and Stirling. But the land of St Medan has charms of her own, and independent of any of these acquisitions. . . . When the sun is sinking below the horizon, and the hills of the Emerald Isle are lighted up with the purple hue of the West, and the Bay of Luce on the one side, calm as a sleeping child, and the storm-tossed Channel on the other, bearing aloft its snowy-sailed ships and smoking steamers, are seen in all their glory encompassing on every side the ancient abode of St Medan; when the moon, rising to behold the scene, casts her brilliant lustre over the fells, cairns, and heather hills of Wigtownshire—a grander view or a more splendid sight, or one in which the hand of the Creator is more evidently manifest, could scarcely be obtained."

Mr Williamson received the rudiments of his education at the Central School of his native parish. He subsequently attended the Arts and Divinity Classes at Edinburgh University. In the year 1881 he was ordained his father's colleague and successor in Kirkmaiden. In the course of his "ordination speech," the subject of our sketch said:—"It has long, I confess, formed part of my ambition that I should become my father's colleague and successor; but I had little conception that my hopes in this direction were so soon to be fulfilled. . . . It is truly an inestimable privilege to be not only permitted but invited to remain in Kirkmaiden; to have the constant instruction and guidance of my father's

wisdom and experience; to have old associations unbroken, and dear friendships retained. . . . My love of Nature, I trust, shall make beautiful my religion; my deep consciousness of that love which died to redeem us shedding its sacred effulgence upon the heart of Nature shall enable me to find everywhere 'tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything.' 'There lives and works,' says Cowper, 'a soul in all things, and that soul is God;' and not the least exalted privilege of the preacher's vocation is the constant employment of raising the mind of his audience from Nature's phenomena to Nature's God; in showing that in all the vicissitudes of this transitory existence a beneficent hand is seen; that the love of Him who walked in Eden is green upon earth to-day."

Our poet has for a number of years contributed to *Chambers's Journal*, the *Christian Leader*, *Life and Work*, *Sunday Talk*, the *Celtic Magazine*, the *Scotsman*, the *Dundee Advertiser*, *Glasgow Weekly Herald*, &c. Several of his dramatic and musical criticisms have also appeared in the *London Figaro*. A number of his songs have been set to very original melodies by Mr Robert MacHardy, a young and talented Edinburgh composer. These have been published by Novello, Ewer & Co., London, and patronised by Mesdames Christine Nilsson, Zarè Trebelli, and Marie Rôze, and sung in Edinburgh, London, and elsewhere, with great success. One of these compositions, entitled "A Song of the Sea," was written by special request for the late Mdlle. Tietjens, the grandest dramatic Prima Donna of modern times.

Mr Williamson's productions were first brought before the public by the late Rev. George Gilfillan, who wrote several highly eulogistic articles upon his poems and essays in the *Dundee Advertiser*. The subsequent patrons of his poetry, we are told, were Mr Matthew Arnold, D.C.L., Archdeacon Farrar of

Westminster, Lord Tennyson, Sir G. A. Macfarren, Lord Aberdeen, Sir Archibald Allison, Lord Wolseley of Cairo, and Principal Caird. Several of these the poet could proudly number as his personal friends. Mr Arnold says that "his blank verse has a genuine rhythmical movement;" while George Gilfillan characterised his earliest efforts as verses showing "a fine, fresh, glowing enthusiasm and very considerable command of thought and language." Dr Farrar of Westminster (who won the Chancellor's Medal for Poetry at Cambridge University) wrote to the effect that he would be "very proud" to have the words and music of Mr Williamson's "Hymn of Summer" dedicated to himself.

We scarcely require to add anything to the opinion expressed by such authorities as we have referred to. By readers of a contemplative cast, Mr Williamson's poetry has long been warmly appreciated. His utterances are full of thought, and free from platitudes. They not only evince natural poetic power, but also poetic skill and artistic science, and he evidently knows that much labour and reflection must be devoted to poetry before it can claim or deserve success. He feels, in the words of a published letter addressed to him by the late Thomas Tyrie, a gifted poet, who died young, and who will be sketched in this volume, that "to write is not a vague desire, but an imperious destiny. The fire is kindled, and *must* break forth. The communication of thought to man is implanted as an instinct in those minds to which Heaven has assigned the solemn agencies of genius. For it is not everyone who can feel the glow of the setting sun, or be impressed with the song of a bird, or the heaving of a glittering wave." His eye seeks the springs of thought and action, and his deep and meditative mind shows in his musical and tender utterances that there is no chain of circumstances so commonplace, no object so humble as not to

contain within it the elements of poetry. With him Nature is not inanimate. His mind goes forth upon all natural objects, and he traces the circumstances affecting every created being, and endows all with a vitality, and draws from them a spirit—an essence. The woods, mountains, and streams, the life-giving sunlight, the tempest and the soft summer air, speak to him in a language which thrills the soul.

GREAT THINGS AND SMALL.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for aye;"
And small things are the sweetest. Fairer far
To me the snowdrop of a vernal day,
Telling the coming end of Nature's war
With her own offspring, than the autumn flower
That rears aloft in pride a haughty head
(As if 'twould never mingle with the dead,
With all the lesser splendours of the hour),
Though all around, sad lessons of decay
And coming doom, arrest the pensive eye;
More dear to me the gentle brooks that sigh
And glide like peace upon their rippling way,
Than mighty rivers rushing to the sea,
With voices sounding of eternity.

To poet-souls small beauties ever bring
Grand contemplations, lessons deep and true;
While great things come with grandeur on their view
They may not comprehend. They ever sing
Most sweetly of the small things of the earth.
And thus we prize more highly the pure birth
Of the meek "Daisy" of our honoured bard,
Than "The Excursion" sounding like a breeze
That bears all fragrance to the fadeless seas
Of immortality; the voice is heard
Of mightiest winds that lash the prostrate plains,
And rend their giant branches from the trees
With less emotion than the tender strain
Whose music melts upon the evening breeze!

HYMN OF THE SNOWDROPS.

Parent of Peace, and Maker of all Might!
We thank Thee for those pale and pensive flowers

Which Thou hast given to gleam upon our sight,
After the darkness of the winter hours.

They come, the first fair children of the year,
To tell us that Thy love is with us still;
That faith shall rise to conquer every fear
In all who wait with patience on thy will.

Thou, who didst bless the lilies of the field
With moral beauty that shall bloom for aye,
Hast given not less to these a power to yield
Lessons of wisdom to our souls to-day.

Artless they shine; but could we understand
The Art that raised them into beauteous birth,
Then should we hold Creation by the hand—
Then should we know the secret of the earth.

We may not grasp that wondrous Force which sways
The workings of this vast, mysterious scene;
We only see God's footprints on those ways
Where His Creative Form at first hath been.

Nor shall we know ourselves as we are known
Till larger knowledge thro' this wandering night
Shall stream around us from that Unseen Throne
Of Truth, that turns all darkness into light.

A POEM OF DEATH.

Immortal conqueror of mortal strife!
Who to our vision loomest far away,
Beside the door of Heaven's eternal life,
And Hope's own boundless, everlasting day;

Thine inexpressive silences we fear;
Of thy dark form we dream with speechless dread;
Most awful to our shrinking thoughts appear
The soundless slumbers of thy gentle dead.

And yet our faith should teach us otherwise;
Should make thy peaceful presence star-like shine,
'Mid sorrow's night, most radiant unto eyes
Wearied with watching for the light Divine.

O dumb and mighty messenger of God,
That holdest His deep secrets in thy hand;
Whom to have known is to have found the road
To heights of knowledge Time can not command;

We love thee not; and yet I do not know
If thou art not a veiled, familiar friend;
We may not feel thee strange, when thou dost show
How blessed is thy mission in the end.

Why should the mind's dim prison-house endure,
If, with the dawning of thy wondrous ray,
On wings of liberty to skies more pure
The soul may rise and wing its endless way.

O, teach us, Silent Spirit, so to live,
That, when we reach those realms thy feet have trod,
We may be strong most hopefully to give
The meaning of our life-work unto God!

IN MEMORIAM: MDLLE. THERESE TIETJENS.

Those glorious strains no more! ah, can it be
That she, who swayed the human heart so long
With the deep passion of divinest song,
Has found the silence of Eternity?

O, nightingale, that thro' the starry night
Sendest the streams of melody and love,
Lament your silent sister, while you light
The listening soul with raptures of the grove!

With passion pure and radiant as thine
She sang the songs sublime of Life and Death;
Of Hope, that faileth not with failing breath;
Of love, the golden-haired, with eyes divine.

With the fresh flowers of Pity in her hand,
She came like sunshine to the lowly bed,
Where life lay waiting for the silent land,
To soothe with sympathy the fevered head.

In light of gentleness she went her way,
While myriad tongues were shouting her renown;
Scorning weak Pride's short-lived, deceitful ray,
The Queen of Song—Humility her crown!

Like an immortal snow-drop o'er her tomb
Hangs sweet Benevolence, with pensive head;
While Memory, by tenderest sorrow led,
Waters the flowers of love that o'er her bloom.

That mighty voice no more! yet shall thy name
Make music in the regions of the mind;

The Conqueror of Heroes cannot bind
In chains the glory of a deathless fame!

Thy spell was potent; never harp or lute
Poured purer raptures to the human heart;
Thy glorious gift made Nature of thine art;
Now in a deeper voice that voice is mute!

"I know that my Redeemer liveth"—Who
More sweetly sang this high, seraphic strain?
And now that Great Redeemer in thy view
Stands to declare thy faith was not in vain.

"Ah, Death in thee"* And shall thy voice no more
Rise like a fountain o'er the raptured ear?
Yea; for, when Death hath made all mystery clear,
Thy holier strains shall glad the Eternal Shore!

A SONG OF THE SEA.

Dark and dismal is the day;
The strong seas lash the snowy spray
Upon the shivering sand;
Black clouds are sailing thro' the sky;
The solemn tempest seems to sigh
Of ruin o'er the land.

A fisher has dared the waters wild
On this dim and dreary day;
A loving wife and little child
Gaze o'er the surging spray
For the tiny boat that sailed away
In the early morning grey;
Hope gleams thro' the gloom in their dewy eyes
'Neath the hopeless skies.

And all thro' the long and weary hours
They gaze o'er the restless sea,
Till the dews of eve fall over the flowers
And the sun steals silently
From the cloudy sky, as Hope from the breast
Of wild unrest.

O, strong was the heart that went away
O'er the seas to-day;
O, *still* is the heart that returns no more

*"Ah, che la morte" is the most inspired and impassioned of the many grand solos in Signor Verdi's lyrical masterpiece—the opera of "Trovatore." It was always one of Mdlle. Tietjens' most impassioned efforts.

To the welcome shore ;
And the helpless mother weeps in vain,
For her hopes are sunk in the sounding main.

Yet the face of the fisher smiles far away
From the evening grey ;
For he stands in the Dawn of Eternity
With a wondering eye ;
And by the shores of the Silent Sea,
O, mother ! he waits thy child and thee.

UNFULFILLED RENOWN.

'Tis sad to see the woodland glories fade
In Winter's cruel breath, and list the sighs
Of ever-growing streams that fill the skies
With solemn sounds, when leaves on earth are laid ;
Sad to behold the dark, deserted trees
Bending as in unutterable woe
O'er their pale offspring, while their murmurs flow
Into the voice of the consoling breeze ;
But sadder far to watch the slow decay
Of some sweet youthful soul who lived for fame
And found it not, because his music came
Too early on the great world's ear, to lay
Impression deep and strong.—No sunset flame
Of mighty triumph crowns *his* dying day !

O yet we trust the early night of death
Fades in the glory of a deathless day
For those who pale, consumptive, pass away,
Panting in vain to breathe the flowery breath
Of fame that feeds on great Parnassus hill ;
And that as labour, feeble in his birth
But strong in life, is sweetener of the earth ;
So the sweet labour of their Muse may still
Be felt in Zion ; and a heavenly fame
Of purer rapture than is found below
May follow those deep strains which softly flow
From harps that ever sound His sacred name,
Whose mighty power, to work His gentle will,
Can make all good the end of seeming ill !

FROM "ODE TO TIME."

At thy command
Invention came, a captive to the mind,
To work the will of man. Then continents,
Between who glorious limits lay long lengths
Of solemn sounding seas, united were

By the electric language, swept along
On wings that shame the pinions of the winds.
Steam poured his marvels o'er a wondering world
When thou didst say : " Arise, O princely power,
For Civilization waits ; and Commerce drags
Her grievous burden thro' the path of pain,
Groaning for thee. Arise, arise and sing
A mightier song to God—the one great source
Of all the mightiest triumphs of the mind."

Aspiring fame
Thro' thy calm atmosphere essays to bear
The beauteous deeds of men to fadeless lands
Of Immortality ; but heavy with the flight
Droops wearily to earth. Oblivious falls
Like some fierce vulture on the drooping bird,
And Fame is seen no more. Like withered leaves,
Sere with the dark of Winter, names decay
Within thy freezing breath, and nought can come
Into Eternity with thee, besides
The all-eternal soul. Thy giant hands
Have changed the winding pathways of the streams ;
Sunk islands in the ocean ; cast the hills
From their first-formed foundations, as a child
The bounding ball ; shattered the rocky shores
With raging seas ; stolen from volcanic hills
Their fiery life ;—yet when that Final Fate
Springs from the heavenly heights on angel-wings
Fierce with devouring flame, in glorious light
Of His immortal presence, earth and thou,
As dew-drops in the morning of your God,
Shall melt away.

KESWICK LAKE, CUMBERLAND.

(This poem is inscribed to my kind and generous friend, Matthew Arnold, Esq., D.C.L., himself an illustrious " Lake poet," and a pupil of William Wordsworth.—D. R. W.)

Do I indeed behold at last
The image of my dreams ?
Yea, that bright hope which starred the past
Before my vision gleams ;
I stand at length in mute surprise
Upon the lake's lone shore ;
The fair, ideal picture lies
In future realms no more !

O, lovely Lake of Derwentwater,
How soothing is thy scene !
Thou sleepest, England's dearest daughter
Amid her mountains green ;

The arms of grandeur fold thee round
In their embrace of love;
Here Heaven's own peace a home hath found,
Like that which shines above.

The twilight of the year is mild
On thy pure breast to-day;
Thou seemest autumn's favourite child,
So still thy calm alway;
Beneath thy crags' aspiring forms
How tranquil is thy rest;
Safe from the raging of the storms,
Thy beauty is most blest.

How grand thy gloom, when lightning streams
Across thy quivering face!
When thunder's mighty shadow seems
To darken all thy grace;
When showers are dancing o'er thy woe,
And thy great guardians stand
Enthroned in clouds that come and go
In a mysterious land.

How deep thy rapture when the voice
Of tempest's passed away,
All Nature smiles and groves rejoice
In light's returning ray!
How glorious Scaffell's crest appears,
Dark rising from his dales!
While Skiddaw, hoary with his years,
Looms o'er the misty vales.

But when the fires of sunset glow
Upon thee from afar,
And wondrous in thy depths below
Is seen the evening star—
O, then, in that calm, holy time
Thy peace is paradise to me;
I breathe the fragrance of that clime,
Where Death is dead, and Love is free!

HAMILTON NIMMO.

OUR poetical and gifted friend, the author of "The Poets' Album; or, Gleanings from the Field of Scottish Song"—a series of papers in the *Weekly News* showing much and careful research, as well as fine literary taste—tells us that in Hamilton Nimmo "our ancient mither" possesses a truly gifted son. He is not only the composer, but also the singer of numerous popular songs, and carries his rare and happy trinity of gifts to an altitude of exceptional excellence. As a tenor vocalist Mr Nimmo earned a reputation throughout Scotland more than twenty years ago. Of late he has appeared more frequently in conjunction with his wife, who, as a vocalist, is, like the grey mare of the proverb, generally esteemed the better horse. Indeed, Mrs Hamilton Nimmo, as an exponent of our old songs and ballads, has few rivals among Scottish female vocalists.

Mr Nimmo was born in 1836 at Catrine, in Ayrshire; and, though the product of a land of song, he may be said to have been reared in Glasgow, and has made music the business of his life. In 1861 he became conductor of psalmody in the Old Church, Ayr, and held that position with honour and acceptancy till about five years ago, when he resigned, that he might pursue more extensively the public entertainment phase of his profession, to which he adds a music warehouse and publishing office in Ayr. In catering for the public taste he has been has been eminently successful.

"Mr Nimmo's song writing," says the author of 'The Poets' Album,' "like Hamlet's madness, has method in it. He sees the end of his subject from the beginning, and fixing his eye on certain desired effects to be introduced in course, he reaches these

in measured order. His duets, 'Hoo can ye Gang, Laddie,' and 'The Crookit Bawbee,' are so generally known and approved as to render critical comment on them unnecessary. The latter is out of print, and thereby hangs a tale. The first sixteen lines are old, and were transmitted to *Notes and Queries* in August 1859, by a correspondent signing himself 'Yemen,' who stated that he had found them among some old family papers. In 1872 Mr Nimmo wrote the additional verses, and published the whole, arranged as a duet, and set, as he then thought, to an old air, the which he had often heard in his boyhood. The publication of this music brought him into a lawsuit before the late Lord Curriehill, which he lost, the copyright claim being established, and the pursuers awarded £5 in damages. The heavy expenses attending the defence of the case—upwards of £1200—forced Mr Nimmo into bankruptcy. The subsequent death of a rich relative, however, enabled him to pay his creditors twenty shillings in the pound, together with interest, and to look the world once more straight in the face." Commenting on the decision of the Court of Session, a local paper wrote thus at the time—"The effect of this decision will deprive the public of a duet which had become a popular favourite, for, of course, the pursuers in the action can only issue their own song, and cannot use Mr Nimmo's version so far as it is his own." And this is precisely the existent position of the affair. Mr Nimmo's words can only be had without music, while, on the other hand, the music can only be had disjointed from the words that have made it so popular.

Regarding "Creep Afore ye Gang," the late James Ballantine, between whom and the subject of our sketch a warm friendship existed for many years, on one occasion said—"My song has been delightfully

wedded to your music." The first eight lines of "Hoo can ye Gang, Laddie" are by Tannahill, while the "Crook an' the Plaid" is original with the exception of the chorus.

Mr Nimmo has a very humble idea of his own poetical powers. He speaks of being "a patcher or repairer" of songs. He is, however, a skilled and tasteful "cobbler," and the result of his patchwork is that many little-known old songs wedded to his music have become popular; while his own efforts are sweet, natural, and tender—some of them possessing genuine pathos and a vein of quiet humour.

THE CROOK AND PLAID.

The brawest and the best o' men the warld has ever seen,
They keepit sheep thegether on ancient hill and green;
Sae keeps my shepherd laddie, tho' lambs stray far and wide,
At gloamig' aye he brings them hame wi' voice, and crook, and plaid.
And he's aye true to his lover, aye true to his lover, aye true to me.

I wadna hae the laddie that labours in a town,
Tho' he dresses in the fashion his cheeks they want the bloom
That decks my shepherd laddie's upon the mountain side,
He's a braw and bonnie laddie, and he rows me in his plaid.
An' he's aye true, etc.

I love to see my laddie as he comes ower the hill,
When I hae by my milking, we meet doon at the mill;
I see his doggies rinnin', as here an' there they glide—
Their barkin' seems to say to me, he comes wi' crook an' plaid.
An' he's aye true, etc.

I love to view his cot-house that rests on yonder brae,
The heather blooms sae bonnie, an' ripest grow the slae;
I'll keep his house baith trig an' clean when he mak's me his bride,
An' we'll never want a shelter, for he wears the crook an' plaid.
An' aye he's true, etc.

DUBS AT OOR DOOR.

When far, far frae hame an' a' that is dear,
Fond dreamings will tine, and misfortune appear;
When sorrow and anguish are rife in your heart,

Hae patience, for light cometh oot o' the dark,
An' weeds maun be pu'd or the flower's bloom remain—
Dubs at oor door, but we prosper again!

At hame or awa', when the heart it is sair,
Be na o'er anxious, and ladened wi' care;
In joy or in sorrow cast upwards yer e'e,
There aye place yer hope, and frae care ye'll be free;
The howe frae the height gets moisture to drain—
Dubs at oor door, but we prosper again!

Oor winters are cauld, wi' frost, snaw, an' rain,
Cauld whiles oor heart is, an' cauld oor hearthstane;
But warm are oor simmers, when winter winds dee,
And warm aye oor hearts are, tho' tears dim oor e'e;
The sun it will shine, tho' tears drap in rain—
Dubs at oor door, but we prosper again!

When fause-speaking tongues are bitter an' fierce,
Trust me the fause tongue its ain heart will pierce;
Toil on through life till the day "that's aye fair,"
Then ill-speaking folks will revile ye nae mair;
Slander proves truth, though the true heart it pain—
Dubs at oor door, but we prosper again!

THE SLIPPERY STANE.

There's slippery stanes where'er ye gang,
In palace, hut, or ha',
So wale your steps, an' no gang wrang,
Lest ower ane ye should fa';
For emperors and kings hae faun,
And nobles by the score—
There's aye a wee bit slippery stane
At ilka body's door.

It's ill to haud a cup that's fou,
I've heard my grannie say;
Tho' siller makes the mare to gang,
It whiles fa's ower the brae.
Gin ye hae tocher, hoose, or lan',
I beg ye no to splore,
There's aye, etc.

If ere ye see your neebor doon,
O dinna let him lie,
But act the guid Samaritan
As ye are passing by;
Your neebor's case may be your ain,
Tho' ye hae wealth in store,
There's aye, etc.

Its a' lang lane that has nae turn,
I've heard the auld folk say;
There's joy to get, an' sae to gie,
To prosper on your way;
An' some will fa', while others rise,
Wha ne'er had wealth before,
There's aye, etc.

THE AULD TIMMER BRIG.

On the auld timmer brig, hoo happy I've been there,
A wee bit toddlin' schule bairn, wha hadna a care.
That day I got the second prize and three weeks' play
I sat me doon in wonder that bright and happy day.
The book I glour'd at fondly, the binding an' the print,
The pictures an' the writing, an' a' there was in't.
A bird was gaily singing upon a bending twig,
An' the water wimpled sweetly 'neath the auld timmer brig.

Chorus.—The auld timmer brig, the auld timmer brig,
The water wimpled sweetly, etc.

On the auld timmer brig I met my first sweetheart,
There, sad to part, we said "gude nicht" when it was growing dark.
The wind blew saftly thro' the wood, trouts loup'd in the stream,
Whilst ling'ring with the dear one that charm'd my sweetest dream.
The brig has grown auld an' frail wi' mony a heavy spate—
Its lot is common to us a' when life is growin' late;
But memory will restore again, when we were young an' trig,
We met wi' ane anither on the auld timmer brig.
The auld timmer brig, etc.

On the auld timmer brig the tongue of truth did tell
The love that was within his heart, while streamlets rose and fell,
Fast flowing to the ocean, for ever to abide,
We 'greed to gang thegither throughout the world wide.
We've never since regretted, an' each the other cheer,
Wi' words o' love an' kindness fu' gaily aye we steer.
The bairns they grow around us, an' when they are sae big,
We hope to gang thegether on the auld timmer brig.
The auld timmer brig, etc.

HOO CAN YE GANG, LADDIE.

She.—O, hoo can ye gang, laddie, hoo can ye gang?
Hoo can ye gang sae to grieve me?
Wi' promises an' art ye hae stow'n awa' my heart,
An' I never, never thocht ye wad leave me.

He.—Oh, lass, bonnie lassie, your broo is milk white,
Your cheek's like the rose in its blossom;
But your heart, gin ye hae ane, is hard and cauld as stane,
An' your lip false to love as your bosom.

She.—O, what hae I dune, laddie, what hae I dune,
What hae I dune sae to grieve ye?
There's true love in my heart, it was never hid by art,
An' I never, never thocht ye wad leave me.

He.—Oh, false speaking lassie, oh, false speaking lass,
Oh, muckle an' sair ye hae grieved me;
The word that's on my tongue frae my very heart is wrung,
An' I'm sorry I maun say ye've deceived me.

She.—Oh, I ne'er was false, laddie, I ne'er was false,
Why dae ye noo misbelieve me?
I've aye been true to thee, whate'er ye've been to me,
An' I never, never thocht ye wad leave me.

He.—This letter ye let drop, lass, another lad has wrote,
An' muckle an' sair it has grieved me;
There's love in every part frae another puir sweetheart,
An' I never, never thocht ye'd deceived me.

She.—This letter ye've gi'en me, lad, the letter ye've gi'en me,
The finding o' this letter needna grieve ye:
The love it speaks to me is frae a brither ower the sea,
Wha sune is comin' hame for to see me.

He.—A brither ower the sea, lass, a brither ower the sea—
I never thocht o' him—oh, believe me;
For he merely says "your Jock" at the bottom o' his note,
An' I couldna think o' him, o' believe me.

Both | Oh, I am no to blame, laddie, I am no to blame,
Oh, ye are no to blame, lassie, ye are no to blame.

Both | Oh, I am no to blame, ye believe me?
Oh, ye are no to blame, I believe ye.

Both | There's true love in my heart, we will never, never part;
There's true love in your heart, we will never, never part

Both | Till death shall break the tie, ye believe me?
Till death shall break the tie, I believe ye?

LET ME KEN HOO THE BAIRNS ARE AT HAME.

(A SAILOR'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE.)

Let me ken hoo the bairns are at hame,
Ilk ane in my dreams aft I see,
Wee Jamie an' Jessie an' Tam
A' laughin' an' daffin' wi' glee;
While ye by the fireside sit
Knittin' or darnin' sae douce,
Ye bid them be quate for a wee,
An' no mak' a din in the hoose.

Chorus.—O let me ken hoo the bairns are at hame,
Ilk ane in my dreams aft I see:
While my bark skims the deep briny main,
I'm waiting an answer frae thee.

Let me ken hoo the bairns are at hame;
Has Jamie gane yet to the schule?
Does Tam aye draw boats on his slate,
As he sits wi' wee Jess on a stule?
Can baby yet speak o' her da—
O' me that she never has seen?
Wha's heart yearns for her an' ye a',
For lang at the sea hae I been.
Oh, let me ken, etc.

Let me ken hoo the bairns are at hame,
An' the love that lies deep in your heart,
That gars tears aye start in your een
As ye stand on the quay when we part.
I'm glad that the bairns in their prayers
Aye seek me safe back unto thee;
An' a' wha hae frien', wife, or bairn,
They wish them safe hame frae the sea.
Oh, let me ken, etc.

ALEXANDER MACPHERSON.

THE subject of this sketch has had a somewhat chequered career. He was born in 1849 at Knock, in the parish of Sleat, Isle of Skye. When he was about six months old an incident occurred that

very nearly put an end to his existence, and deprived his parents of all they possessed. It was at the season when "the heather is fired," and his mother having occasion to go to Isle of Oronsay, three miles distant, young Macpherson was left in charge of his sister about six years of age. A brother, then four years old, had been an interested spectator of the heather burning on the hillside, and finding his mother absent, he thought he would have a conflagration on his own account. Seizing a brand from the hearth, he applied it to the thatched roof, and the cottage was soon in a blaze. Before aid could be procured, the bed on which the infant slept was in flames. The first knowledge that the mother had of the sad occurrence was the ruined and still smouldering hut that a sudden bend in the road brought to her view. She never fully recovered from the shock, and our poet was for years afterwards a weak and sickly child. When he was about six years of age a soldier belonging to the place came home from the Crimea, and the tales of hair-breadth escapes and exciting scenes fired the breast of our young hero. Henceforth his chief ambition was to "serve his country."

At school he made good progress, and his father, observing his aptitude for study, determined to give him every opportunity that his means could afford. He continued at school till he was fifteen, reading in his spare hours all the works on history and poetry he could lay his hands on. His study also of books of travel and adventure, doubtless, awakened within him an irrepressible desire to see foreign lands, which eventually led him to be a soldier. His father's desire, however, was that he should be a minister. After a short experience as a teacher, and filling a situation in England, he attended classes in Edinburgh till his twentieth year, when he joined the 15th Hussars, then under orders for India. While in that

country he found plenty of time for study, to which he once more applied himself after the excitement attendant on his new mode of life had subsided. He was selected to represent his troop on the library committee, and was thus enabled to obtain several works on Astronomy, a study for which he had a strong liking. He first appointment was as assistant teacher in the regimental school. He was subsequently appointed telegraph operator in connection with the 49th Regiment. While at Indore he was for some time lost in the jungle, and experienced considerable hardship; on another occasion he was severely stung by a scorpion that had crept into his boot, and he lay for some time in Hospital suffering terrible agony.

At Meerat, Mr Macpherson attended a class for Military Surveying and Fortifications, and obtained a first-class certificate. He also passed an examination in the Hindustani language, for which he received a Government grant. Space will not allow us to follow out his romantic career. It would make quite a thrilling volume. We must, however, add that when the 19th Hussars came home in 1870, one of the men who volunteered to remain in the country joined Mr Macpherson's Regiment. He told him that the reason he stayed in India was that his wife was dead, that his only daughter was in one of the Orphan Schools, but not "in the strength of his regiment," and he could not get her home, nor had he money to pay for her passage. She had been removed from one school to another till he had lost trace of her. Our poet opened up correspondence with the authorities, he soon found her—and married her.

By this time the romance of soldiering had merged into the reality. He considered that he had been an undutiful son, came to England, and obtained his discharge. After an absence of ten years he thus

returned to his native isle, and was received with open arms by his aged parents. He subsequently obtained employment as a clerk in Glasgow, and he is now engaged in that capacity by a large ship-building firm.

Mr Macpherson began to write poetry when in his seventeenth year, and almost ever since (even when in India) he has contributed thoughtful and often deeply philosophic verses to newspapers and magazines. He has also published several prose and poetical pamphlets under various *noms-de-plume*, including "Priests and Progress," "Elda: a Temperance Story," and "Fenolo: a Poem." These display originality of thought, subtlety of analysis, and a metaphysical turn of mind. In his writings he has proved himself a powerful and unyielding assailant of "hard and fast creeds," and he has written forcibly and impressively against hypocrisy and infidelity in every form.

THE BUILDING OF A SHIP.

Longfellow's ship of the lordly pines
  Hath passed like the mist on a morn in May;
  Mine is the ship of a new-born day,
And culled from the depths of the dismal mines,
Ere o'er ether wilds in the long ago
Fleet light rays flashed in majestic flow,
Chasing dark night from her drear domain
To where things chaotic conjointly reign,
Old geo conceived in her mighty womb,
  In those years of yore,
  That priceless ore
Which now we gather from out the gloom.
There where cimmerian darkness frowns,
  Down in weird caverns unsought by sun,
  Men toil along till the prize is won,
And deserved success their fierce labour crowns.
Huge boulders lie in the sunlight there,
  Torn from the growth of long acons past,
  And soon transformed by the furnace blast,
By gigantic fires with deep-red glare,
Fierce flames at which Vulcan with pride might ply
His hammer to serve great Jove on high.

From the tangled masses of rocks and stones
Enveloped in these fierce fiery zones
Comes pouring forth like a living thing,
Like Acheron's flow in the mythic dream,
That metal which conquers o'er earth and sea,
That metal which binds and sets men free.
Strong iron excelling the metals all
In those halcyon years one sometimes sees,
When nations flourish and live at ease,
Or when they aggressively fight and fall.
Now, come men, with practised hand
Forge and mould it at their will,
And a gallant ship's good keel
Soon comes forth at their command;
And the keel is deftly laid
There by the resounding shore,
And with ceaseless deafening roar
Is men's handicraft displayed.
With fierce din the hammers fall
With wild speed huge engines hie;
Force enslaved from clouds of sky
Freely lends its aid to all.
Men inured to fierce, stern toil,
With their energies aglow,
How they hurry to and fro,
Mingling in the loud turmoil.
Now upreared upon the keel
See the graceful frame arise,
Till we gaze with wondering eyes,
And applaud the craftman's skill.
She hath taken shape and form,
And her contour grandly tells
It is not by magic spells,
But by art we fight the storm.
One by one her bars and beams
Are stoutly fixed each in its place,
And the sounds of action seems
Like when thunder peals in space.
Gaze we on these men—strong-limbed,
Active men—by toil begrimmed;
How with willing hands they ply
Their instruments as days go by.
Decks are laid, the ship's huge sides
Soon are sheathed in iron bands,
And at length she proudly stands
Prepared to cross conflicting tides.
Behold it is a gala day,
See her decked in colours gay,
Flags are flying on the breeze,
Which blows gently from the seas.
And now comes the loud command—
"Let her leave the sluggish land."

Then slowly she glides with a soft, glad thrill
From out the cradle which gave her form ;
But anon, like the roar of the howling storm,
With gathering speed rushes on until
With a leap and an angry plunge she flies
Out on the crest of the yielding waves,
And as the surf of old ocean laves
Her faultless flanks to the bright blue skies,
She uprears her prow as if hurling forth
Defiance to east, west, south, and north.
With her graceful spars and her towering masts,
With her cordage tight and her engines strong,
A meet subject she for a bard's lov'd song,
When she boldly smiles at the angry blasts ;
Or when on the boundless trackless sea
She wanders forth like a bird set free.

A well-formed ship on the surging waves
Is the mightiest triumph of men's proud skill,
As she cleaves the surf with her quivering keel
When the winds rush forth from their boreal caves.
We proudly speak of the men whose hands
Have served to fashion this wondrous thing,
And with joy unfeigned I, a bard, will sing
Of this brightest boast of these sea-girt lands.

PEACE AND WAR.

It is a glorious summer sunlit morn,
And the bright azure heavens serenely smile
With gentle radiance o'er that landscape fair
Of dark, green woods and slow meandering streams,
Which, by wide corn fields and o'er flower-clad meads,
Glide to their home beyond the pebbly shore,
Where the huge ocean calm, and undisturbed
By softest zephyrs, stretches far away
Till the o'erhanging sky arrests the view.
There, where each meet as in a fond embrace,
And as we gaze upon that joyous scene,
Where beast and bird and toiling humankind
Pursue full earnestly that certain sphere
Marked out by will or stern necessity,
We cry, in rapturous strains, "Ah, gentle Peace,
Thou art fair Nature's fairest, loveliest child,
And where thou reignest we behold glad heaven."
Yet o'er that landscape on a spring-tide morn
The gorgeous sun resplendent from on high
Gazed on another scene ; two hostile hosts
Stood on those flower-clothed fields, and eager hands
Grasped each a murderous weapon, and the sound
Of loud-voiced trumpets rent the ambient air,

All signalling for the fight ; and then anon
The steady treads of squadrons mustering,
And the fierce clang of steel, as foe met foe
In a stern struggle, and the deafening roar
Of thundering cannons in wild concert threw
Death and disaster 'mid the opposing bands,
Till o'er those fields destruction held full sway.
There friends and foeman in a last embrace
Lay torn and mangled, and from out the smoke,
Which like thick clouds clothed that once smilingplain,
Nought issued save the cries of savage rage,
Uttered by men in conflict, and the groans
Of those whose life-blood from out ghastly wounds
Ebbed forth upon the earth, till we exclaim,
Viewing those heartless scenes, " Ah, cruel War :
Hell bore and nurtured thee, and like thy dame,
Insatiate malice brands thy hateful brow."

FAITH AND REASON.

Reason, strongest willed, confronts the vast, huge maze
Of the unknown, unseen, and fain would soar
On wings untrammelled, that the early days
Of this world's history he might explore.
He fain would hie to the eternal shore,
And view those scenes enacted when worlds sprung
From misty chaos, when with constant roar
The winds and waters in wild concert flung
Their oft-recurring notes, where stars in ether hung.

But gentle Faith with glad submission hears
The story of creation's early morn,
Or that grand life-work which in later years
Defrayed man's ransom, and her soul is borne
Upon believing wings, where Christ, forlorn,
Hung upon Calvary's Cross, upon His face
Gazing intently, on His body torn
She rests her hand, till she each wound can trace,
Then, with an humble heart, adores God's wondrous grace.

Reason casts doubt and gloom and weary care
Into man's soul, and thro' the confines wide
Of the far future, spreading dark despair,
Leads forth the soul upon a trackless tide
Of helpless hopelessness, and by his side
Stalk speculations of the vast unknown ;
While dreary visions our tired souls deride,
Until proud Reason is at length o'erthrown,
And thus o'erpowered, expires with one long, lingering moan.

But Faith upon our soul smiles sweetly down,
And with fond words dispels each doubt and fear,
Enkindling love where sin once woke a frown,
Till Hope's horizon beams all fair and clear;
Until enraptured we draw boldly near
That radiant shore where happy angels stand,
Where God Himself shall wipe the last sad tear
When we have entered that bright sinless land,
To roam through changeless years amid the ransomed band.

With Reason you may live, but, ah! to die
With him as guide, death is a scene of woe;
The soul hies forth with one despairing sigh—
A trembling thing, and wandering to and fro.
Drear terrors loom upon its path, and, lo!
The darkness deepens on its lonely way,
And the sad cry, "Ah, whither shall I go?"
Comes ever and anon, and not one ray
Of kindly light dawns down from Heaven's eternal day.

Then give me Faith; let her benignant smile
Beam ever on my soul; let her glad wings
Bear me aloft till life's last weary mile
Is crossed, and as her voice in concert sings
With my freed soul, and as the joy bell rings
From Heaven's high portals, I shall swiftly rise,
Leaning upon her arms, as mortal things
Fade ever from my gaze; then the great prize,
Long sought, at length is won—a home beyond the skies.

JAMES WESTWOOD,

WHO enjoys an honoured place in Mr Beveridge's "Poets of Clackmannanshire," is a native of Alloa, and was born in 1850. His earliest recollections go back to Forestmill, a lonely sequestered hamlet where the gentle Michael Bruce kept school for some time, and wrote several of our best Scriptur Paraphrases. Here James was sent to school, but as no compulsory Act was then in existence he was more inclined to accompany in his

wanderings a local herd—a well-known character who went under the name of "Water Bell," and tended his kye by the banks of the Black Devon. Nothing, our poet tells us, could give him greater joy on a summer morning than to hear the herd whistle the word "Jamie," which he did as distinctly and clearly as if it were spoken. He returned to his native town in his seventh year, and attended the grammar school for some two or three years, when, at the tender age of ten, he entered the mill as a piecer. In his limited spare hours he attended evening classes, and became a diligent, anxious, and succesful student. He is still in the employment of the same firm (Messrs J. Paton, Son, & Co.), and has at present the oversight of a "spinning flat." He takes a warm interest in all that concerns his native town, and from time to time contributes prose and verse to the local press under the signature "W." Mr Westwood is about to publish a selection of his poems, which will include a paper on "The Letters of Burns," and a descriptive sketch, entitled "The Historical Scenes in Clackmannanshire." Whether the theme of his poetry be the home affections, the "couthie ingle-cheek," or the beauties of Nature and rural sights and scenes, he is equally felicitous. His poems show tender feeling and natural simplicity, and appeal to the warmer sympathies of the reader.

OH, SCOTLAND! I LOVE THEE.

Oh, Scotland! I love thee—thy dim-crested mountains,
Thy calm moorland streams, and snow-flooded fountains,
Where the proud waving thistle and red heather grows,
And the hill-wimpling brook in sweet cadence flows.

Land of the torrent, the streamlet, and glen;
Land of sweet maidens, and brave honest men;
Land of the pibroch, the tartan, and plaid,
Round thy time-honoured name a halo is shed.

Thy dark-rolling rivers, how sweetly they glide,
By grand hoary pile and grey mountain side;
How thrilling the music as onward they sweep,
To mingle their waves with the fathomless deep.
Land of the torrent, etc.

How rugged thy cliffs by the wild surging main,
Where grandeur and silence and solitude reign;
Where, watching its prey, the fierce eagle alone
Sits silent and proud on its cold stormy throne.
Land of the torrent, etc.

Thy martyrs have perished by gibbet and sword,
Defending the faith of their Master and Lord;
But calmly they rest in their love-hallowed graves,
By purple hillsides and dark ocean's waves.
Land of the torrent, etc.

And dear to our hearts are the warriors bold
Who wielded their blades in the battles of old—
Who conquered and bled for their own native land,
With its song-stirring woodlands and mountains so grand.
Land of the torrent, etc.

MY SHEPHERD LAD.

When Phœbus sinks wi' gowden crest,
And birdies close their e'e,
I blythely meet my shepherd lad
By yon green sauchen tree.
His love is pure, his heart is true,
He's cantie, frank, and free,
And mair than a' this warl's wealth
Or gowd can ever gie.

The wee bit birds are nestlin' soond
Amang the dewy boughs,
And roond our feet wi' music sweet
The Devon gently flows.
I carena for yon stately ha',
Whaur listless love is made;
Gie me the fragrant flow'ry dell
Whaur cheek to cheek is laid.

He rows me in his tartan plaid
At e'ening's dusky hour,
And breathes the saft, saft tale o' love
Aneath yon bosky bower;
And aye the nicht steals lichtly by,
Sae merry, gay, and glad;
Nae dool or care can mar the love
O' my dear shepherd lad.

PRINCE CHARLIE.

Saw ye Scotland's lawful king,
Saw ye nae Prince Charlie?
Heard ye nae the martial pipe
Sounding late and early?
He's doon the glen wi' a' his men,
Marshalling them fu' rarely;
Peer and peasant hae vowed to go
And fight for Royal Charlie.

His banner waves abune the braes,
Whaur blooms the heather gaily,
And plaided chiefs wi' brandished blades
Are gathering round it rarely.
The gallant clans frae muir and dale,
Wha lo'e and trust him fairly,
Hae buckled on the broad claymore
For Scotland and Prince Charlie.

The Lowland lads wi' braided plumes,
And broad swords gleaming clearly,
Wi' loyal pride hae left their hame,
And a' that they lo'e dearly.
Then rouse, ye warlike clans afar,
And meet the foemen bravely,
Wi' willing hearts to do or die
For Scotland and Prince Charlie.

WHEN SUNSET LOOMS BONNIE.

When sunset looms bonnie o'er lofty Demyat,
And hush'd the sweet music o' birdie and bee,
How enchanting the hour that brings me my dearie—
The fair winsome maid wi' the love rolling e'e.

Her smile is the smile o' the bright virgin morn,
That melts the grey mists o'er mountain and lea—
Like sunglints o' heaven the landscape adorning,
Dispelling the gloom from watch-tower and tree.

The wee siller streamlet meanders fu' cheerie,
And sweet lilts the mavis frae yon thorny tree;
But sweeter the voice o' her I lo'e dearest—
The fair winsome maid wi' the blue rolling e'e.

Vain worldlings may doat on their gowd and their treasure,
And tell us fu' aft o' their lordly degree;
But gie me the fond love that swells the fair bosom
O' yon lovely maid wi' the blue rolling e'e.

Blythe summer smiles bonnie, the woodlands perfuming,
And sweet blooms the rosebud by meadow and lea;
Yet sweeter and fairer than Nature's possessing
Is yon winsome maid wi' the blue rolling e'e.

THREE SCORE AND TEN.

Come, rest yer weary limbs, guidwife,
An' draw inower yer chair;
Yer totterin' stap an' waefu' look
Aye mak' my heart fu' sair.
Oor thread o' life is a' but spun,
We're wearin' fast awa',
An' syne we'll reach yon sunny hame
Whaur fadeless floorets blaw.

It's lang sin' oor wee floo'r was ta'en
To deck the gowden land,
An' sing the lays o' endless praise
Wi' a' the ransomed band.
An' a' the lave hae ta'en their gate
Like fledgelin's when they stray,
To brave the warl', its weals and waes,
An' warstle up the brae.

The freen's o' youth, auld cronies dear,
An' mony mair we ken,
That sat aroond oor "ingle cheek,"
Hae slippit thro' the glen.
They've left us a' to wander yet
A wee bit doon the brae,
An' aft I think the gloamin' sky
Looks unco grim and grey.

But love, like yon wee glintin' star
In e'enin's dusky broo,
Aye fills oor hearts wi' gowden hope,
And prospects ever new;
An' Providence, wi' mensfu' hand,
Aye kind to us has been;
Sae in His trust we'll aye confide
Till life's last hour o' e'en.

THE AULD MAN.

Oh, dinna scoff the auld man
When totterin' slowly by,
For ilka thochtfu' stap he tak's
Aye draws a weary sigh;

An' dinna daunt the auld man,
Wha's freen's are unco few;
Ye ken he ance was like yersel',
Wi' freen'ship kind an' true.

His lyart locks are gettin' thin,
An' dark his furrow'd broo;
That form, sae strong and manly ance,
Is weak an' withered noo.
His weary een hae lost the licht
O' manhood's gowden years,
An' langsyne sorrows whyles will come
An' cloud them owre wi' tears.

He creeps alang wi' trusty staff,
An' keeps fu' near the wa',
Aye takin' tent at ilka stap—
Sae frichtit lest he fa'.
An' aft he cracks o' bygane days,
When hope gleamed frae his e'e,
An' life was ae lang summer day
O' lichtsome, sunny glee.

Blythe summer comes wi' gaudy smile,
An' decks the gowan lea,
An' tiny birds 'mong sylvan groves
Tune forth sweet melody;
But noo his heart is waefu', sad,
The grave is unco near,
An' a' aroon' aye tells fu' plain
It's winter a' the year.

MRS GRANVILLE STUART MENTEATH.

IT is seldom, we imagine, that the poetical faculty is found in two consecutive generations of the same family, and as this lady affords such an instance we have thought the circumstance sufficiently interesting to demand the insertion of her name, with specimens of her verses, in the present volume. In a previous part of this work (Sixth

Series) we devoted some space to the productions of her predecessor, the wife of Alexander, sixth son of Sir Charles G. Stuart Menteath, Bart., as one already known to the public by her published works. The subject of the present sketch, again, was the wife of Granville Thorold Stuart Menteath, his nephew, and was the daughter of Mr Thomas Oliver, residing at Lochend, near Edinburgh, and latterly in that city—an eminent agriculturist, favourably known as a writer on questions of rural interest, and much resorted to as an arbiter and adviser on such subjects. Mrs Menteath was born at Lochend in 1843, and we regret to add that her husband and family were left to mourn her loss by her decease in 1881. Her verses show that the mantle of the first Mrs Menteath, in descending on the subject of this notice, fell on one who could worthily sustain it. She evidently makes no effort to engage the imagination by glowing descriptions of external nature, but she portrays and exemplifies in calm, unimpassioned lines the nobler aspects of the higher virtues by sketches conceived in an earnest and conscientious spirit, and well calculated to recommend and enforce a firm adherence to the line of duty and self-denial in defiance of the temptations of interest and inclination.

HOMELY HEROISM.

A noble man, with features pale
  And thin. His stedfast eye
Rests on the golden gates afar,
Bright, brighter than the brightest star,
  And seeks eternity.
    Faint, yet pursuing !

A mother working ceaselessly,
  To keep the very life
Within her feeble little ones !
Faithless the father of her sons,
  Dauntless his patient wife.
    Faint, yet pursuing !

A little child, 'gainst childish faults,
Struggling bravely day by day;
Bear with and aid him yet a while!
He must o'er many a weary mile
Fight on his *little* way,
Faint, yet pursuing!

Ye martyr souls, ye first of earth!
Ere ye escaped your foes,
And passed from earth in blood and fire,
And clasped each palm and golden lyre,
Ye toiled in bitter woes,
Faint, yet pursuing!

Ye who in darkness walk, and have
No light, in misery
Still trust, and in your sad employ
Still walk in faith, if not in joy,
And in sincerity,
Faint, yet pursuing.

THE CHRISTIANS IN THE CATACOMBS.

Oh, who are these who silently
Throng at the hour of dread,
With glimmering lamp and smothered step,
The city of the dead?

Are they the mourners comfortless,
Stealing from hours of sleep,
Their visit to the resting-place
Where they unchecked may weep,

Where needful masks assumed by day
May all be cast away,
And hearts be pressed close to the stone
That guards the cherished clay?

Now, 'neath a lowly dome they meet,
Each kneels in silent prayer;
The misty lights show *Christian* rites,
Tho' Roman forms are there.

There kneels the Roman warrior,
There kneels the Roman slave,
All loving fellow-pilgrims toward
The land beyond the grave.

There, too, in conscious dignity,
The Roman mother stands,

Her fair young daughter by her side
With meekly folded hands.

Intently to the aged priest
They listen, knowing well
To-morrow's sun may rise on them
Within a prison cell!

And now along the streets of tombs
They pass with muffled tread,
Repeating slowly as they go
The words that had been said.

Then passing to the fair moonlight
From out the living tomb,
All stealthily they vanish in
The streets of sleeping Rome.

THE LOVE THAT TURNS AWAY.

Unfathomed is the mighty deep,
Beyond the light of day;
Yet there's a love that's deeper still—
The love that turns away.

And deep, oh! deep is youth's first love,
How deep 'twere hard to say;
But yet there is a deeper love—
The love that turns away.

How noble is the love that waits
Through sunshine and thro' blast,
Unheeding how the storm may rage,
So they be wed at last.

Then brightly burns the wedding torch
That celebrates the day;
But there's a brighter torch that lights
The love that turns away.

I see before me dauntless stand,
Ere yet his locks were grey,
A noble man—*that* love was his—
The love that turns away.

I see him now, as once he neared
The village of his birth,
With beaming eye and bounding step,
And pulses mad with mirth.

He thought of his own love betrothed,
Close by the village green;
And, oh! how many years it seemed
Since her he last had seen.

For her these years were years of doubt,
And fear, and then despair.
News came at last!—Yes, "Died at sea,"
And dying thought of her.

She mourned him long, yet who could blame?
At length her tears were dried;
At length she gave her heart to one
Whose love was fully tried.

The brother of her lost betrothed,
Young Edwin fond and gay;
His manly heart was full of joy,
This was the wedding day.

My noble friend the tidings heard
With grief and sad dismay;
Yet, "Since 'tis so," he said, "be mine
The love that turns away."

He would not dash the cup of joy
From Edwin's lips away;
No! "he will cherish her—be mine
The love that turns away."

Could he but see her once again?
But ah! he dared not stay.
"They will be happy, and for me—
My love must turn away."

The marriage bells rang merrily,
As he went on his way;
His was that higher, nobler love,
The love that turns away.

And in his blighted, darkened life,
Exiled from home for aye,
One thought still cheered him, "They are blest,
By my love turned away."

THE TWINS—LIFE'S STAGES.

Two little orphan girls,
Beside a churchyard mound,
Twining long rose-tipped daisy chains
Their chubby arms around.

Two gentle village maids,
  Meandering side by side,
And talking of the happy day
  When each should be a bride.

Two smiling, happy wives,
  Beside the village well;
Two little ones upon the green—
  Their little Bess and Nell.

Two childish widows, pale,
  Before one cottage door,
Battling with life from day to day—
  Contented, pious, poor.

Two coffins side by side,
  In death as 'twas at birth;
A yawning grave, the daisied sod,
  And this is all of earth.

Yet who the humble dare despise?
  To each his place is given;
In faith the path assigned they trod,
  It could but lead to Heaven.

THOMAS MURRAY.

OCCUPIES a worthy place amongst the poets of Galloway, and is not undeserving of notice among the shepherd-poets of his native land. He was born in 1835. His father, who bore the same name as himself, was a shepherd, and his mother was a shepherd's daughter. Indeed, as far back as he can trace his lineage, his "forebears" carried the shepherd's crook. At the time of Thomas' birth, his father was shepherd in Eskdalemuir, Dumfriesshire, at a place called Castleo'er, the property and farm of George Graham Bell, advocate. Our poet was one of thirteen children, and got but a slender education.

From his early years he had a turn for verse, and soon became known among his fellow-herds for a power to turn an incident into rhyme, and to give utterance to the griefs and the joys that chequer the pastoral as well as every other human lot For some years he herded the "led" farm of Craignell in Minnigaff, within the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, amid the wild scenes made classic by the wanderings of Robert the Bruce, and rendered memorable in more recent times by their association with Alexander Murray, the shepherd boy who became such a marvellous linguist, and attained to the Chair of Oriental Languages in the Edinburgh University. When at Craignell the subject of our sketch became a contributor to the poetical column of the *Galloway Gazette*, and often shared the poet's corner of that newspaper with the accomplished daughter of the gifted parish minister, who wrote under the signature of "Peesweep." His lines in memory of a young shepherd appeared there, and among the pieces which attracted notice were one on "An Old Huntsman," and another giving an amusing rhyming commission to a Newton-Stewart auctioneer to sell his fat pig. He afterwards became a shepherd in the wild upland parish of Carsphairn, in the romantic district called the Glenkens, keeping the sheep of Mr Brydon, the well-known breeder of Cheviot stock, around the sources of the Ken. This is a locality that has produced and inspired notable poets. William Gillespie, of Kells, of earlier date, and George Murray, of Balmaclellan, of more recent date, being more specially gifted with poetic fire. At present our poet is herd at Moorbrock, tending his flock amid hills that for rugged grandeur and beauty are scarcely surpassed in Scotland. Here, as he has opportunity, he cultivates his Muse, which has real feeling, and the ring of true emotion.

AULD MAGGIE'S ELEGY.

Whae'er, my frien's, on hill or dale,
Wha ploughs may drive or plaids may trail,
I trow my case ye'll a' bewail,
When ye do read
My true and unco mournfu' tale—
Auld Maggie's dead.

This Maggie was my maister's mare—
She drew his gig for mony a year;
A surer footed he will ne'er
Put in her stead;
Once few wad left her in the rear—
But oh! she's dead.

When she had grown ower stiff, I wot,
Another for the gig he got,
Then in for odd ane she was put
To cart and breed;
Sae noo has come an en' to that,
For Maggie's dead.

Wi' her I aft hae dung'd the Fey,
An' carted hame the peats an' hay,
Besides the meal I maistly aye
Wi' her did lead;
I kenna what's to come o' me,
Since Maggie's dead.

She needed little whip or rein,
Ne'er boggled at a bush or train—
I could hae left a barefoot bairn
To haud her head;
I'll scare e'er get the like again
O' Maggie dead.

To gie her honestly her due,
They say she ne'er did like the pleugh,
But otherwise to do eneugh
She had indeed;
An' ane an' a' will miss her noo—
She's dead, she's dead.

Poor Maggie took that vile disease,
The *Vete* he ca's 't a shot o' grease;
Nae mair I'll wind her up the braes
Frae moss or mead,
But evermair she'll lie at ease,
Since noo she's dead.

I'll close wi' you, her only dochter,
Your head will shortly fill her halter ;
Howe'er ye gallop, trot, or canter,
I dinna heed,
If in a cart ye just support her
Gude name that's dead.

LONELY SANDY.

Wild December's winds were blawin',
Cauldly leagued wi' rain and hail,
Roun' the mountains high and barren,
Dark and dreary mists did trail.
Flooded burns adoon were boundin',
Foamin' dash'd ower ilka linn ;
A' the glens aroun' resoundin'
To the weird, protracted din.

Up the lone, ootlandish corrie,
Where the thrawart bleaters stray ;
Windin' roun' the summits hoary,
Scottish Sandy spent the day.
Scotlan's plaid aboot him buskit,
Drench'd and dreepin' roun' did sail ;
Batty follow'd sair forgeskit—
Scarce could wield his draggled tail.

Gloamin' fa's, the swain is seatet
Pensive by his ingle-side ;
Batty, in his corner streaket,
Licks his soles and tousie hide.
Sandy, douf and weather-beaten,
Slips to bed to rest his banes ;
Sunny dreams his sleep may sweeten,
But he wakes, and still it rains.

TO A KID OF THE GOATS.

(The First of the Season.)

Hail, early, lively, speckled stranger,
Wee artless, timid mountain ranger,
In me ye needna dream o' danger,
Yet I dread sair,
If we hae lang o' this cauld weather,
Yer ower sune there.

Tho' noo ye croosly cock yer fud,
An' frae me ower the craigs ye scud,
I fear ye'll never chew yer cud
In sunny nook,
Nor pluck the May-flowers in the bud
Beside the brook.

'Tween noo and then we've lang months twa,
An' I hae seen deep wreaths o' snaw
An' icicles—no vera sma'—
Far in April,
An' felt disastrous Boreas' blaw
Baith sleet and hail.

Thus kid, sae far as I can see,
Hard is the lot that ye maun dree,
Thy dame seems lean, her udder wee;
Snell mornin's hoary
Are apt to tell the life o' thee
A fatal story.

Oot spak the kid, Ye needna weave
Yer blind forebodings me to grieve,
Weak tho' I be, I e'en may live
As lang as thee;
Can human monarchs tell the eve
Or morn they'll dee?

Well said, wee kid—I must allow
I dream'tna o' sic wit in you;
Sic things are hid frae human view,
As weel as kids;
Nent wha may see May mornin's hue—
We're even heads.

For He wha cares for a' mankin',
An' horses, sheep, an' goats, an' kine,
A' creatures o' each clime or line,
Baith great or sma',
May shortly order weather fine,
An' favour a'.

Sae may He exercise His care,
An' keep oor hopes abune dispair;
Meantime, wee kid, I'll say nae mair,
But wish ye luck
To grow in body, horns, an' hair
A famous Buck.

AS A FLOWER OF THE GLEN.

As a flower of the glen on a mild dewy morn,
When the robes of the summer are green,
Looks modestly up to the natural sun,
When his rays at the dawning are seen,

How pleasant and gentle and happy it seems,
How pure in its varying hue,

As it hails from the east the enlivening beams,
And smiles in the freshening dew.

Yes, sweetly it smiles, but a change is at hand;
Ere the sun in full vigour hath shone,
A cloud has eclipsed him, and hailstones descend,
And the gem is struck, blighted, and gone.

And such is the sum of this transient life,
And its ties we so tenderly hold
Are as held by a fibre through trouble and strife
And its joys in the shadows are told.

As the natural sunbeam 's to wanderers on earth,
Who storm-stayed or wearily move,
What cheer to the soul through the dark vale of death
Must the ray of the better sun prove.

JAMES GOW,

"THE Weaver Poet," was born in Dundee in 1814. His father was a native of Perth, and served as a soldier in India under Sir David Baird. Mr James Scrymgeour, of Dundee, the well-known philanthropist, who wrote an interesting account of the career of the poet Gow, and who was his warm friend, informs us that Sergeant Gow, the elder, being a brave and tried man, was selected for the forlorn hope in the storming of Seringapatam. Few survived the daring exploit; and to say that Gow was severely wounded would convey a very inadequate idea of the condition in which he was found among the bloody heaps of slain. He was literally riddled with bullets, and his head was nearly cleft in two—the skull being afterwards riveted and kept together by a plate of silver to the last hour of his life. The sergeant, on receiving his discharge, settled in Dundee, where, as we have said, "Jamie" was born.

Our poet was a timid youth, and even shrank from the company of his schoolfellows. By the time that he had learned to read the Bible, and had got by heart the "Single Carritches," attained to a fair round "hand of write," and entered into the mysteries of compound division, he had to leave school, and was apprenticed to a decent handloom weaver "at the Port." His mother, a worthy, pious woman, was very fond of religious poetry, "screeds" of which she would repeat to James. To this circumstance, Mr Scrymgeour informs us, "he attributed his 'turn' for poetry;" but not till he became acquainted with the poetry of Robert Burns did this "turn" become a passion. As his purchase of a copy of Burns was quite an event of his life, we may as well relate the circumstances. One day, while looking over a collection of books that was to be sold by auction in the evening, and observing a copy of "Currie's Life and Poems of Robert Burns," he was fired with the determination to become its possessor. He returned in the evening with some shillings of savings in his pocket. He waited impatiently for the people gathering. At length the auctioneer mounted his rostrum, the poor weaver laddie in the front rank wearied for the putting up of "Burns." At last the coveted book was exposed to competition, and then his courage failed him; through his natural timidness and the "duntin'" of his heart he could not open his mouth to bid a single "bode." In this dilemma he asked a stranger in the crowd to bid for him. The people bade and bade penny after penny, the price mounting up till James began to feel the biddings as so many cruel thrusts at himself. "Man," he said, "I thocht it was real ill-dune o' them to bid against me, though I felt as if I could a' drappit ami' their feet, I was sae keen to get 'Burns.' I nudged the man, wi' the tither 'bid aye' and 'bid aye,' till the book was knocked doon to me at three shillings and

saxpence, and then I cut oot, and hame. Didna I hae a nicht o't, a' the 'oors wi' the cruzie licht readin'."

For a time Jamie plied the shuttle in a corner of his mother's room, and subsequently in a four-loom, dismal-looking shop in the Long Wynd. He toiled for more than a quarter of a century, and, like the sweet-voiced Tannahill, sang to the tramp of his treddles. There he composed those poems which excited so much attention, says Mr Scrymgeour, his faithful biographer, to whose kindness we are indebted for particulars of the present notice. No wonder, then, that they were of a melancholy and desponding cast. How could bright and cheerful verses emanate from such a damp and gloomy place? Yet, strange to say, he was more at home in that haggart hole than anywhere else. He set himself on that loom, resolved "to work in" the "thrumb keel" of his life upon it. His "Lay of the Weaver," which went the round of all the newspapers, was in reality the hard and gloomy experience of the man. The wall at the back of his loom, the two front posts, and the swords of his lay were covered with poems cut from the local and other newspapers. His favourite pieces were pasted, as gems above all others, on his lay and on the wall behind him. Ben the house—that is the corresponding room on the right hand on entering the door—was "The Beggar's Gellie"—a low lodging-house, where sometimes a score of people would nightly sleep on "shake-doons" on the floor at twopence a-piece. These wretched wanderers often stepped into the loomshop, and appeared to pity the poor weavers tramping in the four corners, where they had neither sunlight nor air; and by way of benefit would sing them ballads, and play tunes on the flute, violin, bagpipes, organ, or hurdy-gurdy. Sometimes a party of them would get up a popular concert—a *bona fide* "Beggar's Opera"

—in the loomshop for the gratification of the four weavers, who, to these vagrants, looked like so many prisoners in a condemned cell. James often hung over his lay to listen to the pitiful tales of these waifs of the beggars' gellie.

The handloom weaver required a person to wind the weft for his web upon bobbins or pirns. The poet's pirn-wife was old Janet Sydie, a poor widow who lived in Temple Lane. Having an ailing daughter, who lingered many years, Janet's pastor, the Rev. George Gilfillan, came very frequently to minister to the spiritual and temporal wants of the daughter. The poet was present on many of these occasions, and was highly refreshed in his intellectual and spiritual nature. James, however, had never introduced or obtruded himself to Mr Gilfillan, but in after years, when the poet received an encouraging letter from that gentleman, he was quite "lifted up."

Though Gow has been described as gloomy, he was far from being morose or splenetic; and though he courted no one himself, there was that about him which won him many friends and visitors. All the humble sons of the muses in Dundee would be found at the back of the beam of the poet's loom. Among these were William Gardiner, the poet and botanist, who was born in the same close where Jamie first saw the light of day; William Thom, the "Bard of Inverurie," who for a time exercised a baneful influence over Gow. There were also Professor Lawson; James Myles, the author of "Rambles in Forfarshire," and "The Factory Boy;" John Sime, author of "The Halls of Lamb;" and James Adie, the geologist. Gow's first poetic fruits, presented to the editor of a local newspaper, met with no very encouraging reception, and "the rebuff," he said, "floored him for the next two years." In the fever of his excitement he was led by William Thom to his favourite houff—"The Wheat Sheaf" tavern—where

Thom ruled as the chairman of a "free-and-easy," and many clever but dissolute men met for song, story, and drink. By and by, however, his pieces gained a ready acceptance, and appeared with remarkable frequency. His poetry was introduced to *Tait's Magazine*, *Chambers's Journal*, and *Hogg's Instructor*. A small collection of his poems, under the title of "Lays of the Loom," was published, and ran through several editions. In course of time the poet's health gave way, work became scarce, and various circumstances conspired to embitter the remainder of his days. During his last few years he subsisted on the generosity of a few friends and relations, conspicuous among the former being the late Lord Kinnaird, and Mr Scrymgeour. He died in 1872, and was buried in the Eastern Necropolis.

As Gow became a good deal inflamed by the fiery politics of his neighbours, and was carried away by the fierce doctrines of the Chartists, these opinions, to some extent, impregnated his Muse. Notwithstanding this, his thoughts were characterised by deep, fervid, and touching pathos, with an occasional fine pawkie vein of humour, as witness his "Water Johnny," a felicitous character sketch, the original of which belongs to a period in the history of Dundee when the inhabitants had to purchase water from carts which hawked it about the streets. Mr Ford, to whom we are indebted for "Rab Webster's Lament," which is not given in the little volume, says that humour is Gow's true forte, and adds that the 'lament' contains a rare blend of humour and pathos, for the tousiest 'oo' o' humour has not unfrequently a silken thread of pathos running through its warp and woof."

WAYSIDE WEEDS.

Ye've come again, Winter, sae surly and sear,
Wi' yer snell, frosty breath, to frail Nature severe ;
You killed a' my flow'rets that kind Autumn left,
An' my bower o' its rich, Summer verdure bereft ;
An' far frae the wood to the hawthorn bush
Beside my wee sheilin' ye've driven the thrush,
To mourn wi' puir robin, wha's pitifu' lay
Mak's Nature mair sick-like an' duller the day.
Tho' canker'd and dreary thou seemest to be,
Thou'rt friendly and cheerie, hoar Winter, to me.

What tho' my bonnie sweet flow'rets are gane,
That smiled by the door o' my love-girdled hame,
They'll a' come again at the ca' o' the spring,
An' yer dumb naked woods in rich verdure shall sing ;
The gowan on the lea to the shepherd shall smile,
And the shepherd rejoice in his Maker the while.
Now, tho' yer snawy wreaths mantle the hill,
An' deaden the sang o' the musical rill,
Sic scenes are divine, an', tho' dolefu' an' dumb,
They sweeten the joys that wi' blythe Summer come.

Come, Winter, come, wi' thy awesome alarms,
To me thou art welcome—for me thou hast charms ;
I love when thou reignest o'er forest an' lea,
An' gars the ford foam like a vomiting sea.
Then deeply I ponder on life's wintry hours,
When my limbs may resemble the frost-smitten flowers—
When Death's chilly icicles tenant my breast,
And my soul, with the past and the future opprest,
Dreading to leave its poor, time-shatter'd frame,
To approach that dread Power from whence it first came.

THE AGED MAN.

My crazie life-clockie is a'thing but still,
An' the snaw-bree o' age through my bosom rins chill ;
While my limbs are sae frozen nae summer can thaw,
For my blythe day o' sunshine is langsyne awa'.

Now summer is kindly an' cozie, I'm tauld –
To me it is winter-like, dolefu', an' cauld,
For the saft, sunny breeze mak's me tremble in tears,
An' sigh o'er *my* winter o' twice forty years.

There's naething on earth can bring pleasure to me,
For sick is my auld heart, a ' dim is my e'e ;

That e'en mak's me think that a' Nature is chang'd,
But aiblins 'tis my nature only deranged.

For aften I think, when I'm lanely an' wae,
That morn should be nicht, an' nicht should be day;
An' the sun doesna shine near sae clear as the moon
Shone down upon me when in life's sunny noon.

An' now, when the meadows are gowany an' green,
They haena, as wonted, a feast for my een;
An' though the blythe lav'rock sings loud o'er my ha,
His heaven-toned music seems far, far awa'.

I'm like yonder hawthorn, leafless an' hoar,
That's destined by Nature to blossom no more;
For since the gay summer brought health, love, an' mirth
I'm sadder, an' sicker, and liker the earth.

When next th' green meadows are speckled wi' flowers,
An' th' aged for ease seek the sun-warmed bowers,
Some time-worn pilgrim upon me may rest,
By the gowd-gilded gowan on my divot-clad breast.

But I dread not that hour when o' life I'll be free,
For langsyne I learn'd how mortals should dee,
An' I gae to my Maker warm prayers to enrol
In the Ledger o' Life for the good o' my soul.

DYING ADDRESS OF WILL HARA'S HORSE.

O Will, O Will, I greatly fear
For thee or thine I'll toil nae mair;
My bleeding back forbids to bear
Your ne'er-greased cart:
Ilk joint o' me is e'en richt sair,
And sick's my heart.

Just as the clock struck twal' yestreen,
I swarfed outricht, through fever keen,
Which made my twa time-blinded een
Stan' in my head,
And think ere now I wad hae been
Baith stiff and dead.

Ye needna stan', and fidge and claw,
And crack yer whip, and me misca',
'Tis just as true's ye gie me straw
Instead o' bran,
That my auld stumps forbid to chaw—
I'll dee ere lang.

Or, when I couldna eat the trash,
Ye coft, whan ye were scarce o' cash,
Wi' hazel rung ye did me thrash
On head and hip;
But sune I'll save ye a' that fash—
Lay up your whip.

Gae, tell gleyed Pate, your wisest brither,
That Death on me has tied his tether;
And syne come quickly, baith thegither,
My corpse to manage,
And tak' me whaur they took my mither—
Straucht to the tannage.

But, guidsake! tell na brither Tam,
That shapeless semblance o' a man,
Wha's liker some ourang-outang
Than human being,
Nor ane o' your horse-murdering gang,
Your auld mare's deein'.

Mak' haste now, Will, and gang awa'
For Pate and his auld naig to draw
My pithless banes to Death's chill ha'—
A dreary scene;
For ere you're back I'll lifeless fa'—
Amen, Amen.

RAB WABSTER'S LAMENT FOR HIS WIFE.

Nae ferlie, though I'm dull an' dour,
Less grief than mine's ta'en twenty lives,
For Death cam' like a thunder shower,
An' ta'en frae me the wale o' wives.

My heart sin' syne has slowly beat,
An' doon I'm worn as lean's a treddle;
Yet here I'm rockin' 'ear an' late,
Just like an auld flat-fitit cradle.

My Maggie was a Badenoch lass,
The flower o' a' her Hielan' kin—
As straucht as ony meadow rash,
An' hardy as a muirland whin.

What though as lean's a lav'rock's leg,
As licht an' fretfu' as a fairy;
Nae Fenian corps could daunten Meg
Frae Donnybrook to Tipperary.

Like a' her brave, heroic clan,
She ne'er wad yield to freen' nor foe,
Unless to Rab, her ain guidman,
Or Elder John o' Shuttle Row,

Wha cam' in mercy whiles to speer
If that our purse or spence was toom,
When wabs were scarce an' meal was dear,
An' silent stood fu' mony a loom.

But noo I'm left, sin' Maggie's death,
Wi' neither credit, freen', nor plack;
An' downa get a wab o' claith
In a' the country side to mak';

While mony a hungry wabster chield,
Wi' soleless shoon an' heelless hose,
Hasna the shelter o' a bield,
Nor kensna whaur to get a brose.

Than-langer starve, or idly gang,
Like some auld donart ne'er-do-weel,
I'll try to mend a broken pan,
Or wander wi' a grinder's wheel.

WATER JOHNNY.

Though auld Dundee is counted bonny,
Still oddities she ne'er had ony
Till chance brought to her Water Johnny,
Alias Smellie,
Wha's noo become ilk auld wife's crony,
Wi' cracks sae wily.

He wears a hat wi' half a brim;
A beard, weeks auld, around his chin;
A wizzen'd face, by sloth made grim,
And bogle een;
'Twad tak' an' hour o' Smellie's linn
To mak' it clean.

His dockit coat's threadbare and frail—
To patch the sleeves he's taen the tail;
Wi' nose refuse glazed ilk lapelle,
Or nasty slaver;
He wha its wonted hue could tell
I'd count him clever.

He's sometimes greeting—sometimes singing
Sangs—frae his een the saut tears wringing;
While 'tween his legs his sark tail's hinging
In mony a tatter,
And ill-bred weans dirt at him flinging,
Crying, "Drumlie Water!"

Fu' sair they grieve the eident body,
Because he's friendless, puir, and duddy,
And drives a touzy, stubborn cuddy,
Wi' water load,
That a' the toon wad think't his hobby,
And earthly god.

They, daffin', gar the beastie loup,
The water-butt and cart to coup,
By jobbin' baith at side and doup—
Their chiefest glory—
While Johnny's filling tub and stoup,
Or telling story.

Syne after them he'll rin and scrake,
Like some muircock, or hunted drake,
Till pawkie auld wives wi' him frake,
To stem his ire;
Or, wi' fause love, some daft young glaik
His soul inspire.

Without the body we'd be dull—
The toon like some auld standin' mill—
E'en Balland Bob, or Heather Will,
Whase jokes are mony,
Could ne'er wi' glee a bosom fill
Like Water Johnny.

THE CRIPPLE LADDIE.

The gowan noo smiles owre muirland and lea,
And wiles the young cottars awa' to their glee;
The wee thochtless urchins, how cheerie are they,
Amang the sweet flowers at their innocent play.
They ne'er think o' trouble to mar their sweet bliss,
That is owre pure by far for a warld like this;
But they've left ane ahint them to sigh in his hame—
The puir widow's laddie, wha's sickly and lame.

On a laigh buffet stool, i' the calm sunny neuk,
Nearhand the ha' door, he sits aft wi' a book
That he gat frae a friend as a token o' love,
To raise his young mind to the kingdom above,

Whaur the maim'd are made hale, the wearie find rest,
And nae earthly trouble their joys can molest;
But whiles he thinks lang, and wad fain gae frae hame,
Though every step tells him he's sickly and lame.

Sometimes little Tammie, the kind-hearted herd,
Helps him awa' to the gowan-speckled sward,
Or doon to his bower in the broom-blossomed dell,
Whaur they sit wi' ilk ither, and kind stories tell;
Whilst sweetly the linnet, amidst the haw bush,
Responds to the hymn of the musical thrush;
But soon he grows wearie, and seeks to be hame,
For naething can cheer lang the sickly and lame.

When a' the young cottars gae daffing and glad,
The puir cripple laddie sits lanely and sad;
For when he gangs ony he grows short o' breath,
Which sets him a hosting, wi' face pale as death.
Though young he's asthmatic—of joys he's bereft,
And the fond hopes of childhood his bosom have left;
He has nae pleasure here, and he sighs for that Hame
Whaur a'body's happy, and naebody's lame.

The youngsters aroond him a' gather at e'en
To tell their adventures, and whaur they hae been,
And gie him a floweret, the sweetest they hae,
New gleaned frae the meadow, the glen, and the brae;
But little cares he for their gift or their crack,
For he's pained in his head, in his breast, and his back—
Thae pains gar him wearie to see his lang hame,
Whaur nane are heart-broken, time-wearied, or lame.

THE OLD BEGGAR.

He'll bend no more out o'er his weight-bent staff,
  Which seemed to groan beneath his palsied frame,
Or heed again the mean, insulting laugh
  Of those who mocked, when for their aid he came;
Death's made him rich—nay, wealthier far than those
Who spurned his calls, and laughed at all his woes.

His sores are heal'd, which long unceasing pain'd,
  And made him sick when they would bleed and smart;
His eyes are sealed, which he in hunger strained,
  Looking for bread with palpitating heart;
He's found at last, amidst the storm, that rest
Which baffles man to injure or molest.

The tempest howls, but now he fears it not,
  For ne'er again 'twill make his chill'd heart ache,
Nor his locked eyes in bitter tears to float,

Which saw his bulk but yester-evening shake,
While by the manor gate he starving stood,
Craving in vain a scanty meal of food.

His hunger's quenched, his wanderings are o'er,
And he in Death's embrace has found content;
For see, a smile reigns on his cheek so thin and hoar,
Which tells with God his better days were spent,
And that his soul ascended up to bliss,
To dwell in joy with once poor Lazarus.

O happy change! nought can the soul afflict,
Nor harm in death its wonted clay-built shed,
Which soon must lie a victim to neglect
Among the lowly, all-unhonoured dead,
Who from life's stage by penury were driven,
Whose souls are surely next to God in Heaven.

MARY PYPER,

WHO has a place in "Lyra Britannica," and also in the "Lays of the Pious Minstrels," is one whose lowly yet honourable career should be commemorated in this work. In a very interesting article in the *Christian Leader*, by the editor of the "Lyra," we are informed that she was born in Greenock in 1795. Her father was a clockmaker, to trade, but it was then a time of war, when recruits were often made in an unscrupulous manner, and he one day found a shilling in his pocket, and was told, to his astonishment, that he had enlisted in His Majesty's service. He served in the 42nd Regiment; and Mary, when only six months old, all but perished in her mother's arms, under a drenching rain, during a march from Perth across the Sheriffmuir. Shortly after this her father died from the effects of an accident. Her mother settled in Edinburgh, and earned a meagre livelihood by shoebinding. Our

poetess was a very puny child—almost a dwarf, and of most peculiar appearance. From her birth onward to her death, as was remarked by Dr Charles Rogers at the inauguration of a tombstone to her memory in Greyfriar's Churchyard, Edinburgh, on the 28th of May, 1885, "she was familiar with adversity, and experienced life-long privations." At Edinburgh she was educated by her mother, and after three years' apprenticeship in the House of Industry she became a lacemaker, earning six shillings a-week. She afterwards got employment in a trimming shop, where she remained for fifteen years, living with her mother in a small room in the old town of Edinburgh. They studied history together, and Mary read all the poetry she could get hold of, and thus became acquainted with Shakespeare, Milton, Cowper, Scott, and other poets. A good seamstress, she found plenty of work during the winter, but when her friends went to the country in summer, she was often in great straits, and had to sew for the shops in a way that realised Hood's "Song of the Shirt." She knew the song, and often felt its truthfulness while stitching shirts, "full-sized and full-breasted," for 3½d each. Her mother died, after a long illness, and left £9 of debt. Out of her small wages Mary paid up this sum. She subsequently procured a small basket, and went about selling buttons and fringes. In a letter to a friend she said that her work was both "uncertain and fatiguing. While working in our church school I fell and broke my arm. Eight months after this I was painting my house, and, over-reaching myself, racked my back; and the year before I fell on the frost and severely hurt my head. I have been under great obligations to Miss Scott Moncrieff's family. It was during my attendance on my poor mother that I first thought of composing verses." Miss Moncrieff Scott spoke of her in 1860 as "an old

woman, scarcely able to see to do needlework, very poor, very industrious, and very independent and respectable." With her, as with many others, poverty and poetry went hand in hand.

Mary experienced not a little kindness in her declining years from warm and appreciative friends. A small collection of her poems was published by Mr T. Constable in 1860, and in 1865 a larger and very neatly got-up volume was brought out by Mr Andrew Elliot, who interested himself warmly on her behalf. The result was so successful that the proceeds were the chief support of her old age. The latter volume contains a biographical sketch by her friend Miss Moncrieff, and an introduction by Dean Ramsay, who describes her poems as being of "no common order of excellence, both in diction and sentiment."

Miss Pyper had evidently a sensitive ear for the melody of words, and everything she wrote indicated a humble and peaceful trust in Divine goodness, as well as a warm love of Nature. Her death took place in 1870; and, after a long interval, and mainly through the exertions of Dr Rogers, a handsome memorial cross was erected to her memory in the Greyfriars Churchyard, by friends who admired the career of one who, "under untoward circumstances, cherished her gift as a writer of sacred verse."

ON SEEING TWO LITTLE GIRLS PRESENT A FLOWER TO A DYING PERSON.

Come, sit beside my couch of death,
With that fair summer flower,
That I may taste its balmy breath
Before my final hour.
The lily's virgin purity,
The rose's rich perfume,
Speak with a thrilling voice to me,
Preparing for the tomb.

Each calls to mind sweet Sharon's rose,
The lily of the vale—
The white and stainless robes of those
Who conquer and prevail.
For as it droops its modest head,
Methinks its seems to say,
" All flesh, like me, must quickly fade,
Must wither and decay ! "

And yet it tells of fairer skies,
And happier lands than this,
Where beauteous flowers immortal rise,
And plants of Paradise :
A land where blooms eternal spring—
Where every storm is past ;
Fain would my weary spirit wing
Its way,—and be at rest.

But hark, I hear a choral strain—
It comes from worlds above,
It speaks of my release from pain,
Of rest—in Jesus' love !
Jesus, my hope, my help, my stay,
My all in earth or heaven,
Let thy blest mandate only say,
" Thy sins are all forgiven ! "

Then will I plume my joyful wing
To those blest realms of peace,
Where saints and angels ever sing,
And sorrows ever cease.
Dear mother, dry thy tearful eye,
And weep no more for me,
The orphan's God that reigns on high
The widow's God shall be.

Cull me a sprig of that white flower,
And place it on my breast,
That last effect of friendship's power
Shall charm my heart to rest.
Then, Lord, let me depart from pain
To realms where glories dwell,
Where I may meet those friends again,
And say no more " farewell ! "

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

Infant cherub, wing thy flight
To the glorious realms of light !
Leave this weary world afar,
Shine a bright, resplendent star !

In the presence of thy God
Thou hast now thy blest abode,
There forever to remain
In the Saviour's virgin train.

Sin can never reach her now.
Bright the crown upon her brow,
As when from the font she came
Pledged a follower of the Lamb.
There He sends her to repose
Where the living water flows,
Where the thrilling notes that rise
Shake the concave of the skies.

There to bathe in seas of bliss,
Far from dreary scenes like this;
There eternally to sing
Glory to the Saviour King.
Could thy gentle mother see
All the splendour circling thee,
All the bliss thy state displays,
Sighs would cease for songs of praise!

A HARVEST HYMN.

Assist me, Lord, while I would sing
The praises of my God and King;
But, ah, what mortal tongue can reach
A theme beyond the power of speech?

For when I cast my eyes abroad
Thy dazzling wonders, O my God,
Fill every scene and every sense
With views of Thine Omnipotence.

There's not a flowering shrub that grows,
A thorny bush or beauteous rose,
But speaks of energies divine
Which through all Nature's limits shine.

And when on Autumn's golden crest
Our grateful eyes with rapture rest,
Who can forbear to raise the song
Which should to boundless Love belong?

Thy goodness bless'd the fertile soil,
And richly crown'd the labourer's toil;
Each spacious field is cover'd o'er
With waving corn—Thy bounteous store.

Large flocks beside yon silver flood
Regale in pastures fresh and good ;
Their thankful bleatings as they graze
Confess the Hand that sends them these.

The cheerful birds from spray to spray
Swell Nature's joyful symphony ;
Shall Man, sprung from a source Divine,
Be last of all the choir to join?

No ! let his anthems to the skies
Above the cloud-capt mountains rise,
Till every tongue proclaim abroad
A risen, ruling, reigning God.

"HERE TO-DAY, AND GONE TO-MORROW."

" Here to-day, and gone to-morrow,"—
Why should we so anxious prove?
Why thus dim our eyes with sorrow?
Why not trust a God of Love?

Why, when fortune smiles with favour,
Grasp her fickle gifts so firm?
Hath not our exalted Saviour
Bid us lean upon His arm?

If our lot be crown'd with plenty,
Of that plenty freely share,—
If our portion be but scanty,
Still a little we may spare.

Look not at the grades above us,
Though they walk in robes of state ;
Let not pale-eyed Envy move us,
Be their splendour e'er so great.

Look at those, low sunk in sorrow,
Plunged in grief—in want and woe—
" Here to-day, and gone to-morrow"—
Thither let your bounty flow.

" Here to-day, and gone to-morrow,"
Let us not like recreants prove ;
Cheer the gloomy haunts of sorrow,
For the Christian's badge is Love.

Let not gifts which Heaven imparted,
For our good and others' weal,
Be by harden'd hearts perverted,
Forged in chains that drag to hell.

Rather let us make of riches
Golden wings to mount above,
Where no stealthy thief approaches
That blest land of light and love.

"ABIDE WITH US."

Abide with us in every stage
Of childhood, youth, and hoary age,
That we may never turn aside
In search of any spurious guide.
And when the tide of life beats high,
And earth appears a heaven of joy,
Still let Thy voice be heard within—
"My Son, resist the powers of sin."

Abide with us in every place,
Uphold us with Thy quickening grace,
Let not the world's romantic charms
Have power to tear us from Thine arms.
For she will spread her nets abroad
To draw the thoughtless soul from God;
But they for ever shall be free
Who fix their confidence in Thee.

Abide with us, lest sin prevail—
Lest faith, or hope, or courage fail;
Walk with us, cheer us on the way,
So shall our night be turn'd to day.
And when opprest with doubt or fear,
Let Thy blest presence still be near,
Then all our fear to joy shall turn,
And every heart with ardour burn.

Abide with us, when, melted, we
Would turn with humbled hearts to Thee;
O let us hear that voice of joy,
"Be not afraid, for it is I!"
And when at last life's setting sun
Proclaims our day of grace is run,
Then, Heavenly Pilot, guard and guide—
We would constrain Thee to abide!

Abide with us through death's dark gloom,
Till we have reach'd the silent tomb,
That there our souls, from sin set free,
May rest eternally in Thee.
And when Thy Judgment Throne is set,
And all the world in one are met,
Then shall Thy joyful Voice decree,
"Come, all ye blest, abide with me."

TO THE MOON.

Queen of the crested horn and silver bow,
Whose powerful influence rules the raging deep,
'Tis sweet, where yon soft murmuring rivulets flow,
To watch thee rising o'er the rocky steep.
To mark thee mounting thy cerulean car,
Attended by thy satellites of light,
While thy fair herald, the bright Evening Star,
Proclaims thee peaceful Empress of the Night:
Let me beneath thy pale, green curtains rest,
Or roam at large o'er some fine flowery fields,
Where all are charm'd to pleasure—all are blest,
Crown'd with the joy thy radiant presence yields,
For every feeling heart must own the power
Of Nature's beauties, and an evening hour.

EPITAPH—A LIFE.

I came at Morn—'twas Spring, I smiled,
The fields with green were clad;
I walked abroad at Noon, and lo!
'Twas Summer—I was glad.
I sate me down—'twas Autumn eve,
And I with sadness wept;
I laid me down at Night, and then
'Twas Winter—and I slept!

WILLIAM HAMILTON

WAS born in 1863 at Bonnyrigg, in the county of Midlothian. After receiving a good education, he was apprenticed to an Edinburgh S.S.C., and having completed his legal studies at the University with honours, and successfully undergone the various examinations prescribed for the profession, he was qualified as a solicitor and law agent in Edinburgh. Mr Hamilton began to write verse at an early age, and the bulk of his compositions was produced in intervals of leisure before he had

chosen as his calling the somewhat arduous profession of law. He has mostly resided in the country, and is an ardent lover of Nature and the Fine Arts. His poems have not yet been published in book form, although many of his verses have appeared from time to time in periodicals. When he writes of home affections he does so with tender felicity, and presents graceful word-pictures. Indeed, gentleness of feeling and true emotion are the characteristics of his Muse.

EARLY HOME.

Whate'er thy part in life may be,
  Though far the spot thy footsteps tread,
By country, desert, city, sea—
  Where'er thy form by fate is led—
I trow there is a place that fires
  Love's flame soever thou may'st roam—
A spell unto thy heart inspires
  A lasting hold of early home.

What memories of bliss arise
  Within man's care-emburdened mind!
What scenes of rapture meet the eyes
  Of Fancy that Time cannot blind!
Because what sweets he knew when there
  In childhood, ere he learned to roam—
Unmatched the dearness anywhere
  Of scenes around his early home.

The humble cot of old excels
  The stately mansion home of new;
His fancy in the cottage dwells,
  And meets the far surrounding view.
It hears the prattling all the same
  Of children 'neath rich Nature's dome,
The sounds and all it doth reclaim
  As long since round his early home.

It sees his friends—his dear lost friends—
  And all his former mates about,
While everything in union tends
  To make his heart the more devout.
He longs to view these scenes again
  With eyes of sense before they gloam;
To survey every hill and glen
  He'd known around his early home.

He comes with zealous, blythesome heart,
While Hope leads on his soul before,
To act returning wanderer's part,
And muse o'er happy days of yore.
Then better to him than the stores
Of pelf he held across the foam,
His natal cot and native shores
Are, with what stays of early home.

THE COT.

Hoo couthie is the little cot
Within its rough stane wa's;
Nae gowden grandeur shines aroon',
Nor ony kingly braws;
But there, amid the humble fare,
An' guids sae void o' glow,
Is seen a routh o' kindly life
Nae castle grand can show.

Hoo cosie is the ingle, roon'
Whilk a' the bits o' weans
Sit bien between their parents fond,
When labour's done at e'ens.
They're a' content wi' what they hae;
An' what could e'er excel
A hamely, humble cottage hearth
Where lovin' hearties dwell.

Tho' kings may boast o' regal bluid,
An' higher rank than theirs,
They canna speak o' fonder hearts
Than cottage household shares.
Tho' nobles eat o' dainties rare,
An' dine in brilliant ha',
They canna taste o' warmer love,
Or sweeter pleasures draw?

While riches bring to lords an' knights
Sair troubles for the mind,
The cottars, toilin' for their bread,
Gain peace Peers canna find;
An' when they can a morsel spare
Unto the wand'rin' train,
They share it wi' a kindly heart,
Nor hear them ask in vain.

I HA'E NAE LAD AVA.

'Maist ilka lassie has her lad—
Some e'en ha'e twa or three;

But oh, what mak's my heart sae sad,
It seems there's nane for me.
At e'en, doon by the burnie's side,
Rove blythely ilka twa,
While I at hame maun freetin' bide—
I ha'e nae lad ava.

Ilk birdie on the buddin' bush,
Ilk maukin on the lea,
Has its ain lo'esome mate—but hush!
It isna sae wi' me.
The sangsters tune gay sangs ilk day
O' love an' mates fu' braw,
But I maun lilt a strain o' wae—
I ha'e nae lad ava.

I kenna whaur the blame may lie,
May be my taste's owre nice;
But, ah! hoo mony pass me by,
While ne'er ane speers my price.
I'd lo'e a laddie weel, I voo,
My heart I'd gie him a',
An' to him wad I aye be true—
But I've nae lad ava.

I NOO HA'E A LAD O' MY AIN.

The birdies may sing in their rapture,
The maukins may sport on the lea,
For noo I am free frae Care's capture—
My heart is aboundin' wi' glee.
As the laverock's my sang is as cheery,
What other could I be than fain?
Nae mair need I sit sad an' eerie—
I noo hae a lad o' my ain.

Fu' canty we wander at e'enin',
When Nature retires to her rest;
The moonlicht comes oot intervenin',
An' shines on the lad I lo'e best.
We whisper love's charmers fu' sweetly,
Renew them wi' kisses again;
He tells me he lo'es me sae meetly—
I noo hae lad o' my ain.

He asks me to come share his dwellin',
To wed a fond laddie like him;
He's this, tho' nae mansion or mailin',
A heart fu' o' love to the brim.

I'll tak' the advice o' my mammie,
If noo she will let me be gane;
He's true, and ne'er meddles the drammie,
The lad I noo hae o' my ain.

HARVEST SONG.

Now Nature's annual task's nigh dune,
An' bonnie shines at e'en abune
The gowden corn, the harvest mune,
An' ilka thing wears beauty, oh!
Chorus.—Hey, oh, the harvest time,
The jolly, jolly harvest time;
My heart is aye the blythesome lad's
At ilka bonnie harvest time.

She now assigns her work to man,
That he may reap wi' willin' han'
The bounty laid upon the lan'—
An' sic will be our duty, oh.

I'll tend my stent amang the lave,
An' but a lo'esome lad I'll crave
To be my ban'ster, wha can brave
Ilk care wi' manner canty, oh.

An' there we'll speak o' love fu' gay,
Wi' cheer we'll croon the rig ilk day,
An' lilt our love-sangs—come what may,
Our hearts will be fell vaunty, oh.

"DA, DA, DA."

It's braw to hae a hoosie and a wifie o' your ain,
But e'en better is the bliss o' a wee bit laughin' wean
That lifts the heart in rapture o'er the warldly, carking a',
Wi' its cooin', an' its gooin', an' its "da, da, da."
Chorus.—"Da, da, da," ilka morn an' ilka e'en,
"Da, da, da," while the pair o' gems are seen;
The restless handies play, the heartie loups fu' fain,
A love divine is linked wi' the guileless wean.

The days flee past fu' lichtsome wi' the echoes in my ear
O' the wifie an' the weanie, in charmin' tones o' cheer;
But aye welcome is the hour when the gloamin' shadows fa',
An' I'm greeted by the bairnie wi' a "da, da, da."

Then the rosy, cosy lowe casts a glow athwart the hearth,
An' the kettle at the boil sings its lay o' hamely mirth,
Till the bairnie's hushed to sleep in its mammie's bosey-ba,
An' awhile is ceased the gooin', an' the "da, da, da."

Oh, oor hame is bricht, contented, an' happy evermair,
Wi' a routh o' peace and pleasure, tho' modest be oor fare;
What forms the croon o' valour true that mak's us regal a'
Is the love that gi'es us rapture in the "da, da, da."

CHARLOTTE JOBLING,

ALTHOUGH born in Belfast, resided for a considerable time in Glasgow, and there acquired a most astonishing facility in the use of the Scottish language. This will readily be acknowledged by those who have lately been reading and admiring her very graceful, melodious, and thoughtful ballads, poems, and songs in several magazines and in the columns of the *Glasgow Herald*. For this reason, we think, she is entitled to a place in the present volume. Mrs Jobling is a widow, at present residing near Dublin. The only daughter of a sailor, she is fond of the sea, and has written much and ably on the subject of the ocean in all its moods. She lived in sight of it till her marriage, and always thinks with sincere pleasure of the days when she spent most of her time on the shore. In 1881 she contributed (anonymously) a poem entitled "Effie" to the "Mistletoe Bough Annual," conducted by Miss Braddon, who complimented the writer very highly, and referred to the piece as being one of much merit. Mrs Jobling occasionally writes in prose, and her collection of "Folk Lore," and a most unique gathering of epitaphs, copied by herself, are of much value, and show indomitable care and research. Her poetry evinces brilliant fancy and gracefulness of expression. Whether she muses on the magnitude of the grand old ocean, the places of historical interest, or on

objects of imposing natural beauty, she is equally musical and flowing in style—rich and copious without being redundant. Much of her writings are imbued with the pathos peculiar to the ballads of the olden time, and, such being the case, they are welcome additions to a department of literature in which Scotland is so rich.

"OVERDUE."

Out on the wild, wan waters
A shattered, rudderless bark,
Rolling, heaving, and plunging,
Spoil of the billows dark.
With a higher heave and a deeper
Plunge will the strife be o'er,
And the waves go swirling and foaming,
But the ship come forth no more.
Forbid, O Heaven, forbid it!
And save them, captain and crew,
From the wrath of the cold blue waters,
And the ship be but "overdue."

Eight long weeks she has tarried,
Till anxious hearts at home
Are strained—ay, almost to bursting—
With longing for them to come.
Their sons, and husbands, and brothers,
And mothers, sisters, and wives,
Pray for the good ship bearing
So many precious lives.
Will their prayers be heard and answered,
And, safe with captain and crew,
Will she ever come back to harbour,
This eight weeks "overdue?"

What is she—wife or widow?
That girl who, with listless grace,
Sits rocking a babe that never
Smiled in his father's face;
Hoping 'gainst hope and reason,
With an ever-increasing fear,
Now that the weeks have numbered
The sixth part of a year;
Scanning the lists, all trembling
Lest her half-formed fear come true,
And the ship be reported "missing"
That as yet has been "overdue."

Never a hasty knocking
Strikes suddenly on her door,
But she thinks 'tis the touch of fingers
May raise its latch no more;
And never a hurried footstep
Pauses e'er going past,
But she starts with the hope of tidings
From her husband's ship at last.
And nightly in dreams she sees him
Enter. May they come true!
And his ship return to harbour,
Tho' eight weeks "overdue."

BLOW HIM HOME.

O, winds that soaring, raging,
Blow eastward from the sea,
I pray you seek my love's ship
And speed her home to me.
The days to weeks are mounting—
Soon weeks to months will come—
And I am weary waiting
Till my love comes home.
O, sea-breeze blowing eastward,
To one heart be kind,
And when you find my true love,
Blow him home, good wind.

The west-wind sought her true love
In vain for many a day
O'er all the wastes of ocean—
In every creek and bay.
Tho' anxiously with good will
Both east and west he sought,
No tidings of her true love
He ever homeward brought.
Tho' he took his brother wild-winds
To search the seas they roam,
They never found her true love,
And never blew him home.

AT HER FEET.

I laid me down at my darling's feet—
Feet I half feared might spurn me away;
I had sought and found out my love's retreat,
Where she sat on an ivy-clad garden seat,
Shaded somewhat from the noontide heat,
On a glorious summer day.
Never a word I offered to say,

But lay at her feet as her hound might do,
With wistful gaze looking up to the blue
In her eyes, as a saint to Heaven, or you,
Perchance, may, when you pray.

But O, if with half my fervour you prayed,
Some answer you would be sure to win,
Tho' it might be a week or a month delayed,
Or even a year, for it undismayed
You might wait, and never once feel afraid.
But when on a woman you pin
Your faith, then troubles and cares begin,
Heart-aches and self-abasements ; low
On the earth as you grovel to and fro,
Walking and dancing her feet will go
Gaily, as if 'twere no sin

To dance upon human hearts—as tho'
They felt no more than the stones on the street
The tramp of the dray horses, heavy and slow,
Dragging their loads ; but right well I know,
Tho' light hers fall as the fall of the snow,
Or fairy-like thistledowns, that they beat
On my heart with a weight with which all the feet
Stamping, galloping evermore down
Thro' the stoney roadway of London town,
Could never, tho' doubted, compete !

And yet I love her—could I but command
The love of a thousand maids more fair,
For fair she is not as men understand
Beauty. But O, for one touch of her hand,
One smile, the fairest in all the land—
The noblest and sweetest anywhere,
I would give, if I might, nor once compare
Their best with a single glance from her eye !
And so wholly my darling's slave am I,
If she would but care to behold me die,
I would die, and pass from care—

Care that she cares not to relieve ;
Care that she adds to whenever she may !
O, fellow-sufferers, you can conceive
How I look upon death as a long reprieve
From the worse than death-pains to which I cleave—
Worse ? Ah me, what is this I say ?
Surely my wits must have gone astray
For a moment, and left me mad. O, why
Need better than here at her feet to lie,
Sunning myself in the light of her eye,
Unchidden the whole long day ?

PEDLER'S CREAM.*

O, some may sing the whisky-still,
An' some may sing the beer,
An' some may praise the sparklin' rill,
An' others wine may cheer;
But nane o' these I'll ever sing
While glaiks hing frae the beam,
An' I can mak' the churnstaff swing,
An' drink o' "Pedlers' cream!"
So gie to me the buttermilk
Wi' butter-blobs a' swimmin';
For buttermilk's a sonsy drink,
An' guid for men and women.

When ony country lad can drink
Of buttermilk his fill,
I marvel he should ever think
Of brewery or still.
But though with fiery draughts accursed,
Or ale your glasses ream,
I, when I'm weary or athirst,
Will call for "Pedlers' cream."
Then gie to me the buttermilk,
Wi' butter-blobs a' swimmin';
For buttermilk's a sonsy drink,
An' guid for men and women.

WINIFRED LEE.

Grey-haired and bent, by the ingleside
Sits Winnie, just Winnie, our Winnie Lee,
Dressed i' the white that beseems a bride,
Tho' never a bride will ever she be.

Over the sands rode Solomon Grey,
When naebody kent, an' naebody saw;
The quicksand swallowed his bonnie bay—
His bonnie bay an' himself an' a'.

That bridal mornin' drew on till noon,
An' noon drew on to the shadows o' night,
But her bridegroom cam' neither late nor soon—
Her love, her pride, to his heart's delight.

Then she said to her mother—"Mother, mine,
What has become o' my bridegroom, say?"
"I know not, my daughter, but I opine
Ill has happed to his bonnie bay."

* The first milk taken from the churning is so called in the north of Ireland.

Then she turned to her faither—"Faither, dear,
What has become o' my love to-day?"
"I know not, my daughter, but much I fear,
He has ridden perforce down another way."

Then she spoke to her sister—"Oh, sister Bell,
What is detainin' my bridegroom there?"
"Naething can I o' yer bridegroom tell—
I hae seen o' him hide nor hair."

Then she cried to her brother—"Brother, ride—
Ride an' bring hither my love to me."
"'Neath twenty feet o' a flowin' tide,
How can I howk i' the sands o' the sea?"

Then she knew he had ridden across the bay—
That the shifting sand had swallowed him down;
Tho' it's twenty years since that bridal day,
Winnie wears nought but a bridal gown.

She never will look on the flowin' sea,
When the tide is down. "Thro' the gate o' the sand,'
She says, "my love will come back to me,
An' I maun be ready to give him my hand."

I am her sister—her sister Bell—
An' the first o' us twa that he lo'ed was me,
An' gin ony ane asks o' me I can tell—
I am no that grievet for Winifred Lee.

LIARS.

If e'er a liar
I know—and know him to be such—I'll fly
His company, as far as Heaven is high
O'er Hell, or higher.

I could lock up
From thieves, but how against deception guard,
Or due significance to words award—
Words that flock up

From lying hearts
To lips as shameless all? Ungifted I,
With instinct—instinct such as beasts employ
'Gainst human arts—

Were I a hound,
By gazing on this face or that I'd know
If he were true—and if the heart below
Her smiles were sound.

Being but as I
And fenceless; from the man you know a liar,
Farther than east from west—than Heaven higher
I rede you, fly!

HAMILTON CORBETT.

SCOTCH vocalism sustained a heavy loss in the sudden death, at Greenock in 1885, of Hamilton Corbett. Although he had only attained his thirty-fifth year, his fame as a singer of Scotch songs and as a story-teller was world-wide. "Corbett" was merely a professional name—his real name being Thomas Magee. He was a native of Glasgow, and served his apprenticeship to the plumbing trade. He subsequently obtained employment with a firm in Greenock, and, being gifted with a very superior tenor voice, he was appointed precentor in the West Parish Church of that town. He thereafter became a professional singer; and, in addition to giving for several years entertainments throughout the United Kingdom, he visited America, where his "Nicht wi' Burns," and other national programmes, were enthusiastically received. At home he was also a universal favourite. His fund of anecdote was almost unlimited, and his humour and fun side-splitting and exuberant. His powers of interpreting the true meaning of musical thought and its harmony of coherence, were acknowledged by the most accomplished authorities; while his frequent outbursts of pawky humour, as well as touching pathos, are evinced in several poems and songs of his own composition. These were not the least popular items in his delightful entertainments, and proved that he

found music in the heart of nature, and realised the fact that poetry is musical thought. Like nearly every other song-gifted Scot, Hamilton Corbett was an ardent patriot, and his soul-stirring rendering of the songs introduced in his "Prince Charlie and the '45," will not soon be forgotten. With him Scotland was a melodious word, always fresh and heather-scented; and he loved its minstrelsy with its thrilling notes, and all that is spirit-stirring in war, love, and nature.

THE SONG OF THE EMIGRANT.

I'm lying on a foreign shore,
An' hear the birdies sing,
They speak to me o' auld lang syne,
An' sunny memories bring;
Oh, but to see a weel kent face,
Or hear a Scottish lay,
As sung in years lang, lang by-gane—
They haunt me nicht and day.

My hair, ance like the raven's wing,
Noo mixed wi' siller threeds,
Mind me o' ane wha used to sing
O' Scotia's valiant deeds.
She sang while I stood at her knee,
The dear sangs o' langsyne—
"Auld Robin Gray," an' "Scots Wha Hae,"
Or "Myrtle Groves" sae fine.

She sang to me "The White Cockade,"
She sang the "Rowan Tree,"
"There was a Lad was Born in Kyle,"
An' "Bonnie Bessie Lee."
Whaur are the sangs can melt the heart,
Or gar the saut tear fa'
Like auld Scotch sangs sae dear to me,
Noo that I'm far awa?

I've watched the sun at morning tide
Strike o'er the lofty Ben;
I watch him yet wi' greedy e'e
To whaur he sets again.
I ken he shines on Scotia's shore,
Tho' far across the sea,
An' while I live, I'll always sing,
My native land, of thee.

THE BEGGAR'S WALLET.

Come, rax me ower my auld meal pock,
We'll see what it contains,
I ken there's meal, I ken there's cheese,
An' twa three guid rough banes.
See, here's the hoch bane o' a stirk
That fed beside the mill,
An' here's a loaf, an' here's a scone,
Sae a' may hae their fill.

Cheese pairin's, crusts green mouldy grown,
That cam' frae Faither Cairns,
(Tho' I prefer't without the mould)
They're unco guid for bairns;
A pig's fit frae the minister's,
(I kent the beastie weel),
Forbye a ham stump an' twa eggs,
An' a hinner flank o' veal.

Twa dizzen tatties, an' a doo,
I *fand* them on the road,
A daud o' braxy aff the brae—
'Twas reared wi' Gavin Todd;
He's lost nigh fifty sin' the spring,
I doubt they're ower fat gane,
They dee in twas an threes, an' then
Lie down by dyke or drain.

A lump o' butter an' some kail,
I've got them in my can,
Four reestit herrin', an' a snipe
'Twas shot by Willie Strang.
Some meal, some flour, a pair o' socks,
Twa bauchles an' a brat,
In bawbees, shillings three-an'-sax,
Sae what think ye o' that.

Wha says our's is a wretched life?
We live like fechtin' cocks,
We've a' we want, ye weel may see,
When we coup out our pocks;
Sae pass the jorum, for I'm dry,
An' shout amang the kebars,
Lang life, guid health, an' "fou meal pocks"
To a' the tribe o' beggars.

HERE'S TO YE, SCOTLAND.

Here's to ye, Scotland, where'er I may be,
Here's to ye, Scotland, the land o' the free ;
Here's to ye, lassies, and here's to ye, laddies ;
Here's to ye Scotland, love, honour and thee.

Why did I leave auld Scotia's shore to sail across the sea ?
It was a wee love story, but I maunna tell't to thee,
For fear my een wad blin' wi' tears an' brak this heart o' mine—
'Twas in my summer days, lads, the days o' auld langsyne.
Here's to ye, &c.

When thinking o' my laddie days, or toddlin' hame frae schule,
Or on the bonnie broomy braes wi' Mary o' the mill,
Whiles harryin' some wee birdie's nest, or guddlin' in the burn—
The happy thochts come back to me, and whisper lad return.
Here's to ye, &c.

Then a bumper I'll drink to the heroes sae bold,
Wha hae focht aye an' bled like their fathers of old ;
Up, up, lads o' the thistle, wave bonnets o' blue,
Three cheers for auld Scotland, the hearts that are true.
Here's to ye, &c.

CHARLES STEWART.

THIS Scottish-American poet, who presently resides at Galt, Ontario, belongs, says a writer in the *Toronto Globe*, "to much the same state of life as did Burns and Hogg, although not exactly, for while the one was a ploughmanand the other a shepherd, Mr Stewart was a weaver, as was his father before him." He was born at Ballieston, Glasgow. His schooling was limited indeed, and that little he received was between the age of seven and nine. Our poet had two miles to travel to school, and his task of yarn to wind for his father before and after school each day. He early began to woo the Muse,

but being very diffident, a number of years elapsed before he offered anything for publication. His first production appeared in the *Northern Star*. "With a companion he had gone into the town to post his contribution, and he had even started to return without having deposited it, when his friend asked him if he had left it, and upon being answered that he had not, his comrade compelled him to return and post his communication."

Mr Stewart went to Canada in 1856, and has lived in Galt or the neighbourhood ever since He became librarian of the Galt Mechanics' Institute in 1878, which position he continues to fill with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of the members of the Institute. He is a frequent contributor to the *Scottish-American Journal* and the local newspapers, and has lately published a volume, entitled "The Harp of Strathnaver: A Lay of the Scottish Highland Evictions, and other Poems." Patriotism and love of country and pride of native land are the most marked characteristics of our gallant and noble band of Scottish-American poets, and Mr Stewart is one of the sweetest of his singing brethren. He gives us admirable pictures of Scottish life and character, full of deep pathos and tender feeling.

AULD GRANNY MUCKLEJOHN'S VIEW OF THE TIMES.

Auld granny by the ingle cheek,
Wi' luntin pipe one evening sat,
And cozily her shins did beek,
And wi' the bairns held couthie chat,
O' her ain youthfu' gleesome days,
That never would again come back;
And folks' then simple, honest ways
She, fondly garrulous, thus spak':

"The warld's a' gane gyte I ween,
Since years that I hae min';

Things noo are nocht like what I've seen
In days o' Auld Langsyne.
And though noo dowie, dowf, an' blin',
I see things through a haze,
Yet mem'ry lichts me up within,
Wi' gleams frae ither days.

"And brawly do I min' the days,
When I, a gilpy thing,
Did rumple-tumple doon the braes,
And dance the jing-go-ring.
Folk werena then forfoughten sae,
An' teased for lack o' gear,
For neebor's love was aye a stay,
When ony dule cam' near.

"Aye humble was the cotter's lot,
Yet he could fen' fu' weel,
While hoosewife thrift kythed in the cot,
Her pride, the spinnin' wheel.
The aumry then, baith skelf and rack,
Was stowed wi' routh for a';
While cleedin' guid, o' hamert mak',
Gied comfort, an' was braw.

"And mair than that, I mind fu' weel,
When lairds wore hodden grey,
An' kept accounts wi' cauk or keel,
Yet trusty lairds were they.
To learnin', sma' was their pretence;
But weel they understood
The a—b—abs o' common sense,
And rules o' manlihood.

"The fear o' God in age an' youth
Was deeper rooted then;
And honesty had wider scouth
Amang the sons o' men.
The grand auld kirk, a dread to scamps,
Wi' heresy abased,
Was then nae howff for preachin' tramps,
Whase sermons ding folk crazed.

"Wi' things ordain'd folk were content,
An' straits aye war led through
Wi' thankfu' hearts for blessings sent,
However sma' or few.
But time has some fell cantrip cast
O'er things langsyne revered,
An' *men*, the licht o' ages past,
By *yochels* noo are jeered.

"Frae guid auld simple, honest ways
The warld's a' sae changed,
Whene'er I backward turn my gaze
I feel like ane estranged.
I dinna see the clachan coo,
An' muckle garden plot,
That helped to keep the aumry fu'
Within the puir man's cot.

"The festive days, when kinsfolk met
Wha were divided far,
An' a' on mirthfu' pastime set,
Noo scarcely heeded are.
E'en New'rday past on tip-tae steals,
Ere ane kens it has been;
Nor are there witches noo, nor deils,
To mak' a Hallowe'en.

"An' oh! it mak's me wae to think
How youths their e'enings spen',
How music things, they tinkle-tink,
An' dally but an' ben;
Where round the ingle ranged at e'en,
When wark had ceased a-fiel',
Lads knitted, lassies trig an' clean,
Did birr the spinnin' wheel;

"While jokes, an' sangs, an' cantie tales
Passed roun' wi' couthie glee,
An' coonsel that for guid avails
They'd whiles ilk ither gie;
Till doon the muckle family Book,
The Book o' holy lays,
The guidman reverently took,
An' closed the nicht wi' praise."

AULD SCOTLAND ISNA DEAD.

[On reading in the *Scottish American Journal* a poem by Mr George Bruce, St Andrews, entitled "Auld Scotland's Dead."]

"Auld Mither Scotland dead and gane?"
Na, sir; I winna let you say't;
Ye maun be wonderfu' mista'en,
To think her heart has ceased to beat.

On being tauld what ye had said,
To ken if sic mishap could be,
I wrapped my shouthers in my plaid,
An' dauner'd o'er the gate to see.

But she nae symptoms has o' death ;
And though she's been dung owre fu' sair,
And fashed at times wi' gri ppit breath,
She's aye been spinnin' less or mair.

For, though she's growing somewhat auld,
She hasna tint her ways o' thrift ;
By honest toil, through heat an' cauld,
She for hersel' can e'en yet shift.

And tentie aye o' what she earns,
To keep wi' care, or wisely spen',
That she may cleed an' schule her bairns,
To fit them for some usefu' en'.

Nae thriftless, randie beggar, she
For sympathy and alms wont whinge,
But work or fecht until she dee,
And never for an awmos cringe.

Sae drap your coronach of woe ;
Lift up wi' glee some blyther strain,
And briskly gar the numbers flow,
For dear auld Scotland isna gane.

And that He lang her life may spare,
Ilk ane should wi' the giftie plead,
For, ane an' a', we'd miss her sair,
For usefu' wark and doughty deed.

When ony black mischief appears,
Menacing Britain's rights or laws,
Were Scotland dead, I hae my fears,
Nane e'er like her wad wield the tawse.

For when there's need to skelp a fae,
And bluid maun e'en be freely spilt,
Aye foremost in the deadly fray
Are seen the bonnet and the kilt.

And wheresoe'er abroad ye gang,
Her bairns at honour's post ye'll see,
And hear encored her ilka sang
That breaths o' love or libertie.

Then what could put it in your head
In lamentation loud to rave
About auld Scotland being dead
And buried in an English grave ?

Gae doff again your auld grey plaid,
If it as mourning weeds you wear,
And for your chanter send the maid,
That ye may blaw it loud an' clear.

But cease your coronach of woe,
An' lilt a blyther strain instead,
And gayly let the numbers flow,
For brave auld Scotland isna dead.

TELL IT NOT YOU ARE POOR.

Tell it not you are poor, if in life you would rise,
For even the poor do the poorer despise;
And if by misfortune you're trod in the dust
Instead of a lift they will give you a thrust.

To own yourself poor, and set up for a man,
Would seal your own doom with society's ban;
For manhood, as viewed in most civilized climes,
Is the bloated abortion of dollars and dimes.

A heart without feeling, a head without brains,
Can always pass muster where dignity reigns;
But known to be poor, though intelligent, wise,
You can not be one of the capital I's.

On the highway of life, the true Christian man,
Without purse or scrip—a begrimed artisan
Of virtuous aim—he obscurely must trudge,
To others less useful, a hack and a drudge.

Thus honest men often, in poverty's thrall,
With passports to soar have been destined to crawl
In life's social puzzle great factors misplaced,
With the Maker's inscription and trade-mark effaced.

While those who engage in the shams of the times,
To build up their manhood with dollars and dimes,
Though pledged to the order of noodles and snobs,
Are feted with smiles and soft lucrative jobs.

Then ye who would flaunt in life's masquerade halls,
And trip the light toe at gay charity balls,
To the undisguised poor let your passing salute
Be such as to show you their kinship dispute

Yet use them for gainings, appraising the while
Your relative worth by the size of your pile,
Contrasting with theirs your own dignified state,
A step above nature uplifted—"How great!"

Go flounder in debt, into bankruptcy blunder,
Meet creditors' claims with ten cents to the hunder,
Then pocket the dimes, advertise yourself higher,
And smile at the epithets swindler and liar.

In business transactions make shaving the rule,
Mix sand wi' your sugar, sell shoddy for wool,
Point your nose to the sky, to the ladies look bland,
Be a saint while in church, and your greatness is planned.

And when you have gained, by deceit or by stealth,
Some dimes or domains, such as constitute wealth,
The merchant, the banker, the clergyman too,
Will give you his hand with a "How do you do?"

And though but a gomeral, your knowledge and sense,
In gossip and law, will be shrewd and immense;
Each tete-a-tete scandal, or drift of a mob
Will then be referred to the great Mr Snob.

ALEXANDER MURISON,

A POET of deep pathos and tender feeling, was born in the parish of Pitsligo, Aberdeenshire, in 1859. His birthplace is within a short distance of the ruined castle that gave shelter to the scholarly fourth Lord Pitsligo, whose estates were forfeited in consequence of his espousal of the cause of the Pretender. His parents struggled hard to give him a fair education, but before his tenth year he was sent out into the world to help to add to the stinted family exchequer by "herdin' kye" and "gaun errands" to a farmer near-by the humble cot. At the age of fourteen we find him apprenticed to a shoemaker, and since then he tells us that "shoemaking has never failed to keep the wolf from his door."

In 1882 Mr Murison went to Australia, where he remained for nearly two years, when ill-health compelled him to seek again his native air. At present he is employed at Rosehearty by the firm of Campbell Brothers, shoemakers, Fraserburgh.

Mr Murison has for some years contributed with much acceptance to the *People's Friend* and *People's Journal*—the two publications that have done so much to foster the "Modern Scottish Poet." His poems have also appeared in other periodicals and newspapers both at home and in Australia. His writings show considerable facility of expression, and his thoughts are always fresh and varied. Several of his songs have been wedded to appropriate music. These are natural, easy, and flowing, and exhibit a poetic feeling and pathos that flows direct to the heart.

I SAW A LARK.

I saw a lark spring from its dewy bed,
And soar far off into the upper space;
And as it higher soared I, wond'ring, said,
Shall I thus singing reach my resting place?"

But suddenly my thoughts were drawn away
From self; the creature turnèd wildly mad;
Its head seemed bent toward the fount of day;
Its song now slow, now fast—it was so glad.

I listened, for I knew some thrilling sight
Had met its eye, and made its heart so free—
"O Spring! O Spring! come with thy hand of might,
And move the buds to live on ev'ry tree.

A hearty welcome waits thee; souls bow'd down
Are tired of Winter in her dreary dress;
Come, maiden, with the sweetly-scented gown,
We sorely need thy loving, kind caress."

"Yes, little bird, since you're the first to see
My wings spread out upon the morning gale,
Go tell your little mates that soon I'll be
Abiding with them on the hill and dale.

And bid them have their pipes in tune ere then,
For many merry songs they have to sing;
And tell the weary, weeping sons of men
They'll not have long to fear dark Winter's sting.

Go to the hillside where the brooklets sleep,
And tell them they must join the tuneful throng;
And don't forget to bid the daisies peep
From out the earth to listen to the song.

And if the poet has not been up here,
Astride on Fancy, with his pen in hand,
Just whisper in his ever-open ear
That I am come again to deck the land."

The lark descended with a ringing note:
When work was waiting for my hands to do,
Away I hastened from the hallowed spot,
Possessed of strength to do the work of two.

MY FISHER LADDIE.

Oh, does my fisher laddie ken
His Jeannie's heart is sair?
An' does he hear the weary mane
That ilka breeze maun bear?
"Thy fisher laddie's hameward boon',"
Returns the placid sea;
But oh! the billows' waefu' soon'—
"Nae mair, nae mair to thee!"

My fisher laddie, hear the wail
That comes fae Jeannie's breast,
An' hameward, hameward set thy sail,
An' bring thy Jeannie rest.
"Thy fisher laddie's hameward boon',"
Returns the placid sea;
But oh! the billows' waefu' soon'—
"Nae mair, nae mair to thee!"

Thy Jeanie scarce can lisp thy name,
Nae sail can Jeannie see;
My fisher laddie, oh! come hame,
And see thy Jeannie dee!
"Thy fisher laddie's hameward boon',"
Returns the placid sea;
But oh! the billows' waefu' soon'—
"Nae mair, nae mair to thee!"

O, WHEN THE WIND.

O, when the wind in wrathfu' sweep,
Comes down to stir the mighty deep,
What woman's heart that daurna weep
Whase ain's amid its ravin'?
O, aft the tear is in my e'e,
When glimm'rin' owre the ragin' sea,
For him wha's mony miles fae me,
The angry billows bravin'.

But, ha! there's aye a ray o' licht
Upo' the heels o' gloomy nicht,
Sae ilka gruesome thocht tak's flicht
Like dew in summer mornin'.
Whene'er the boat is by the pier:
Whene'er I look upo' my dear,
I hae nae care, I hae nae fear,
The wind and weather scornin'.

The summer comes wi' routh o' wark,
Wi' nets to spread an' nets to bark
Oot i' the bonnie gow'ny park,
'Mon' lads an' lasses rantin';
The bairnies, barefit, on the green,
At heels-owre-gowdie may be seen,
Or in a san'-hole to the een,
A' blest—nae joy awantin'.

When winter comes, 'tis best o' a'—
A roarin' fire disarms the snaw,
The bairns and father in a raw
At some aul'-farrant story;
The waves brak' wildly on the rocks,
We men' oor nets, an' crack oor jokes
As licht o' heart as gran'er folks—
A little heaven o' glory.

MARY AND I.

Who watched the sun creep low?
Mary and I.
Who thought him very slow?
Mary and I.
When birds retired to sleep,
When stars began to peep,
Who ran their tryst to keep?
Mary and I.

Who roamed the shady wood?
Mary and I.
Sought nooks where few intrude?
Mary and I.
Who thought the grassy lair
Softer than courtier's chair?
Who felt true pleasure there?
Mary and I.

Who now are far apart?
Mary and I.
Who now are sad at heart?
Mary and I.
Fate, canst thou tell thy gain,
Parting two hearts so fain?
O! may we meet again,
Mary and I.

OUTWARD BOUND.

Hoist away, hoist away,
Hoist altogether;
Gone with departed day
Storms and foul weather.
Time with a heavy chain,
Dragged along sadly,
Now on the bounding main
Dances it gladly.

Sisters and wives so dear,
Tho' we must sever,
Dash down the silly tear—
'Tis not for ever.
Sail we the salt seas o'er,
Rough tempests bearing;
But to return with more
Joys for thy sharing.

Where is the hope that sheds
Lustre the brightest?
Where is the foot that treads
Life's maze the lightest?
Not where the landsmen shout—
"Peaceful my pillow;"
But with the sailor out
Far on the billow.

Hoist away, hoist away,
Hoist altogether;

Gone with departed day
Storms and foul weather.
Time with a heavy chain,
Dragged along sadly,
Now on the bounding main
Dances it gladly.

'TIS SPRING-TIME, YOU TELL ME.

(Written in Queensland.)

'Tis spring-time, you tell me,
And where are the flowers
That came at the bidding
Of sweet April showers?
The daisy, the primrose,
The violet small,
The snowdrop—the meekest
And sweetest of all.

And oh! for the fresh buds
That decked the old tree,
And spoke, but spoke kindly,
Dread lessons to me,
To watch them thro' summer,
To see them decay,
To hear their death-whisper—
"Thus thou fad'st away."

'Tis spring-time, you tell me,
But how can it be?
No kind, watchful skylark
Proclaims it to me.
When heart's blood goes bounding
Like wild mountain streams,
Oh, blissful awak'ning
From long winter dreams.

And where is the blackbird
That watched for the sun,
And told all his wood-mates
That spring was begun?
And where is the linnet
That sat on the thorn,
And sung of the pleasures
He felt on that morn?

And where is the throstle—
The forest's proud king—

That sung out so wildly
At coming of spring?
The lapwing, whose wailing
Thro' still nights was borne—
"'Tis spring-time, kind farmer,
Come forth with thy corn."

And, oh, for the brooklets
That sing as they go—
"Ha, spring-time, and freedom
From prisons of snow."
What snows must be melted
Ere spring come to me,
And, like to the brooklets,
My spirit be free!

REV. DAVID ARNOT, D.D.,

SON of William Arnot, farmer at Blaketieside, in the parish of Scoonie, Fifeshire, was born in 1803. Of strong intellectual precocity, he was, in his sixteenth year, sent to the University of Edinburgh. Having completed the Arts' Curriculum at Edinburgh, he, in 1824, became a student of Theology in St Mary's College, St Andrews. On the 2nd April, 1828, he was, by the Presbytery of St Andrews, licensed to preach, and soon afterwards he was appointed ministerial assistant in the parish of Ceres. Here he attained much acceptance, and was chosen by the patron one of a leet of three candidates who were on a vacancy in the Parish Church of Newburgh, offered to the parishioners for selection. Though another candidate had a greater number of votes, Mr Arnot was the popular one; and the circumstance conduced to his being invited, in April 1836, by the Town Council of Dundee to occupy the Third Charge of that town, as assistant and successor to Dr

Patrick Macvicar. After a short time he became sole minister of the charge, and his popularity both as a man and as a minister was of a high order.

When the Disruption took place in May 1843, Mr Arnot being reputed as one of the most popular of the non-retiring clergy, was at once elected senior minister of the High Church of Edinburgh. His talents as a preacher and refined orator led to his receiving, in 1843, the degree of D.D. from the University of St Andrews. A votary of the fine arts, Dr Arnot's crayon portraits of his friends might have elevated him to the Presidentship of the Academy; while his skill as a sculptor, wholly untutored, has in Scotland been rarely surpassed. Several exquisite specimens of his chisel appeared from time to time in the exhibitions of the Academy. An accomplished harmonist, instrumental music was, under his guidance, introduced into St Giles' Cathedral after the primary restoration of that edifice.

When a student of Divinity in St Andrews, he contributed poems and sonnets to the *Fife Herald* newspaper. These, in 1825, he published in a duodecimo volume of 93 pages, entitled "The Witches of Keil's Glen, with other Poems." The distributed copies of this little book he afterwards bought up and destroyed, but the compositions are creditable to the writer, especially considering that they were written in youth. Consequent on his well-known poetical taste, he was appointed by the General Assembly in 1855 Convener of their Committee on Paraphrases and Hymns.

Dr Arnot, who had for some time been in failing health, died on the 15th May, 1877. Subsequent to his death there was published as a tribute to his memory several of his devotional compositions. He published, in 1861, a discourse on the death of the Prince Consort. Several other discourses he had issued previously. It should be added that one of

his daughters married a son of Henry Scott Riddell, the well-known poet.

THE COVENANTER.

The summer twilight had declined
  Dim o'er the darkening hill,
And night had strung her harp to sing
  Her anthems with the rill;
And the gloaming star was glittering,
  High in its stainless purity,
  With peerless beauty, in the sky;
  And o'er the breast of the hill so green
  The dew drops fell with twinkling sheen,
  While heather-bloom, and blue-bell fair,
  Owned its blessed influence there:
  The scene as Paradise seemed still!
  The airs of night, the eloquent rill,
  The starlight on the gentle hill,
  The dew that fell in silentness—
  It was a fairy scene, I wis:
  Oh, lovelier night shall ne'er again
  Smile on thy vale, sweet Rutherglen!

But who is he, that aged man,
  Whose brow is sad, whose cheek is wan?
  Why hath he made cold heath the bed
  Whereon to rest his snowy head?
  Those withered limbs but ill may bear
  The night-chill even of summer's air.
  With clasped hands he slumbers there,
  And face upturned as if in prayer.
  O'er such face seldom comes a smile,
  And yet one brightens there the while.
  Devoutly pause! what can it be,
  That soft aërial minstrelsy?
  Those tones that seem to fall from heaven,
  As from the lips of the Forgiven,
  That living breath of harmony,
  That music-strain—what can it be?

"Rest thee, servant of the Lord!
  Soon shall end thine earthly sorrow;
  By the godless victor's sword
  Thy precious blood shall flow to-morrow.
  For thy zeal towards the Word,
  And a Covenant unbroken,
  From bondage thou shalt be restored,
  As this vision is a token."

The trumpet's voice his slumber broke,
The Covenanter quick awoke,
And girt himself to meet the foe—
Drumclog ! thou sawest his heart-blood flow—
Thou sawest his soul, bright as the levin,
Quit thy red field, and soar to Heaven !

DURA DEN.

Maid of the mild and pensive brow,
  My invocation hear !
Thou brightest of the bright below,
  And dearest of the dear.
When far beyond the Lomond's height
The day hath winged its downward flight,
And left behind the opal's hue :
When silent falls the evening dew,
And birds are hushed, and earth is still,
And tranquil all, save lapsing rill,
When twilight steals o'er hill and glen,
—Then meet me, love, in Dura Den.

The night cloud shall not damp thy hair,
Nor breezes chill thy bosom there ;
For I will shield thee in this breast,
Where oft thy head was wont to rest,
And winds that wander happy by
Shall hymn for us their melody,
And stars that smile on heaven's brow
Shall hear, but not reveal our vow,
Our bosoms that pure joy shall prove,
Those only know who truly love ;
And we will linger there, till morn
With orient beam to earth return—
Oh ! we shall part too soon—and then
Adieu to thee and Dura Den !

SUMMER.

The beautiful summer is gone !
  It is gone with its balms of delight
And its memory we linger on,
  Like a bright dream of the night :
It hath passed on its perfumed wing,
Like some radiant celestial thing,
    —The beautiful summer is gone !

We dream of its loveliness yet
  We dream of its bright sunny flowers,

Its repose we may not forget,
Like the thoughts of our childhood hours;
There's a voice amid Nature's decay
That speaketh of bliss passed away—
The beautiful summer is gone!

Yet holier these feelings to me,
And fraught with bliss tenderer far,
Than summer's most gay pageantry,
Or all its rich glories are--
A sadness most sweet enwraps the soul,
We would not, if we could control,
When the beautiful summer is gone!

TO AN INFANT.

Young babe of beauty! thou art pure as yet,
And bright the lustre of thy cherub eye,
As radiance which the angels' wings emit,
Caught from the splendours of Divinity,
As they flit past the throne of the Most High.
And, sweet babe, placid is thy brow of snow,
Round which the yellow tendrils curl, and glow
Like sunset billows playing on the shore.
Oh! never may the branding seal of woe
Impress its felon mark on hue so fair.
Sweet dimpling smiles thy face are staying o'er,
And all is bliss and heaven that beameth there.
Such once was I. Yes, babe, as pure as thou,—
But ah! sweet peace of mind, where art thou now?

JOHN JOHNSTON,

THE Sanquhar poet, who died in 1880, was born at Clackleith, Sanquhar, in 1781. His father was one of the largest sheep farmers in the south of Scotland—a man of great good sense, and possessed of a considerable amount of proverbial Scottish shrewdness. John, who was the eldest, acquired a knowledge of the classics and mathematics. He early

stored his mind with all kinds of historical, antiquarian, and poetic lore. The stirring events of the first French Revolution, however, fired the ambition of young Johnston, and, without the consent of his parents, he, with indiscreet patriotism, left the paternal roof, crossed the Border, and enlisted in the Royal Marines at Bolton in 1802. He spent the most of his prime in the Royal Navy, obtaining his discharge in 1814. He received no pension, however, and to enable him to earn a livelihood, he kept a humble school at Benston, Old Cumnock. Here his intelligence and worth was generously recognised by the late Marchioness of Bute, who built him a cottage and schoolhouse, and bestowed upon him a small salary. When, at eighty years of age, he had to give up teaching, another friend came to his aid—Mr A. B. Todd, the accomplished poet, to whom we are indebted for the details of a number of our sketches, and particulars of whose career will be found by our readers at page 130 of the first series of this work. Mr Todd published a powerful and touching appeal on behalf of the worthy veteran, which was liberally responded to. His brother poet was also successful in securing a pension for Johnston of £27 7s per annum from the Admiralty. Mr Johnston's principal production is "Lord Nelson," a poem in two cantos, published in 1873. It possesses much excellent sentiment expressed in vigorous language. Mr Johnston died, as already stated, on the verge of a hundred years. "After all his wanderings by sea and land," says Mr Todd, "he now reposes in the quiet churchyard of Old Cumnock;" and on the base of a modest monument are carved these lines:

> "My warfare's o'er; no more the battle-cry
> Breaks on my ear here where in death I lie
> Asleep in Christ, in whom was all my trust.
> Here rests in holy hope my aged dust."

The stone bears the following inscription :—"Erected by William Johnston, in memory of his father, John Johnston, born at Clackleith, Sanquhar, 21st July, 1781 ; fought under Lord Nelson at Trafalgar in 1805 ; received a pension from the Admiralty in 1871 ; and died at Benston Cottage, Cumnock, 1st September, 1880 ; aged 99 years and 41 days."

BATTLE OF THE NILE.

(Conclusion.)

And whilst the fleets prepare to leave the shore,
Let us the state of Egypt now deplore.

Where are thy Goshen's vales, thy Delta's plain,
That once supplied the world with wholesome grain ?
Stupendous pyramids on every side
Meet the astonished view—the Egyptian's pride.
Each top, to us, surmounting clouds appears,
Has stood the tempests of three thousand years ;
Thy numerous statues all to us impart
Thy former knowledge of the sculptor's art ;
Thy wretched natives now a barbarous band
Of ruthless plunderers, invest thy land ;
Thy soil is sterile—niggard to produce
What life sustains, or what is fit for use ;
Whilst o'er thy regions gross delusion reigns,
And superstition dark o'erspreads thy plains.
Such prospects drear within the vision's range—
What eye can view, and not lament the change ?
Despotic sceptre sways the banks of Nile ;
Her sons outvie the feigning crocodile.
Adieu, till freedom basks upon thy shore,
And furious tyrants rule thy realms no more.
All things in order, hence they sweep their way,
And with their prizes soon they leave the bay ;
For Hercules' Pillars—straight their course they keep,
And in full sail they plough the foaming deep ;
That point attained, their course they northward steer,
Till Albion's chalky cliffs in sight appear.
Each heart elated with their late success,
To gain the harbour all their canvas press ;
And now the port is made, their anchors gone,
And each relates the wonders they have done.
With wives and sweethearts they the hours beguile,
And each is hailed a hero of the Nile.

BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

(CONCLUSION.)

'Twas now October, and the eighteenth day,
The combined fleets again their anchors weigh ;
Their movements *Polyphemus* soon perceives,
And to Lord Nelson information gives.
With his full force he eagerly pursues ;
The breezes light, and then a calm ensues ;
Nelson, impatient, caused the boats to tow,
With hawsers fastened to each lofty prow ;
But vain th' attempt such lofty ships to stay,
As even one tiny knot add to their way ;
But on the twentieth springs a gentle breeze,
Which south conducts them smoothly through the seas ;
The twenty-first, when morn began to clear,
The combined fleets to leeward did appear.
In a bold crescent ranged, their squadrons lay
Near Cape Trafalgar, along Mary's Bay.
Then Nelson's telegraphic signal flew,
"England expects each will his duty do."
In two divisions down on them we bore,
Whilst tremulous dread each nervous system tore ;
Five hours of calm suspense our seamen wait,
Whilst o'er their heads thus hung suspended fate !
All sail we made, the breeze being very light,
Whilst every heart seemed eager for the fight.
To break their line it was our sole intent ;
They closed, this bold manœuvre to prevent ;
Their shots flew thick around us all the while,
As we approached them in majestic style ;
Nor dared we fire, lest that should keep us back ;
The breeze so light, such would our motion slack.
Lord Nelson chose *Saint Tissima Trinidad*,—
Four tier of guns, two thousand men she had ;
Orders his ship to lay along her side,
Resolved to humble her gigantic pride,
The *Royal Sovereign*, first of the lee line,
In gallant style did through the crescent shine ;
Opened her fire with such tremendous roar,
As made the rocks resound along the shore.
In swift succession followed all the line ;
Nelson's division last in battle join.
Each picked her mate, on purpose to subdue ;
The *Temaraire* assaulted was by two,
For two full hours betwixt their fires she stood,
Defends her colours, though deep stained with blood.
At last the *Cæsar* came to her relief,
Did her rescue, but proved the Frenchmen's grief,
This new attack did not resist at all,
But yield at once, and down their colours haul.

Whilst Nelson paced the quarter-deck alone,
Three blazing stars upon his left breast shone,
Hardy, respectful, whispered in his ear,
"My lord, put off those trophies which you wear,
For now the action presses close and hot,
They but expose you to the soldier's shot."
"No," said brave Nelson. "I such act disclaim ;
Should I my country's trophies thus disdain !
Such the respectful mark our king bestows,
I'll ne'er put off to face my country's foes."
Thus had he spoke, and scarcely yet turned round,
When, 'midst the stars, received the fatal wound ;
Upturned his eyes when first he felt the check,
Then sunk down backward on the quarter-deck.
Hardy beneath him did a sail cloth throw,
And cautiously had him conveyed below ;
The surgeon probed the sore, by which he found
His lordship had received a mortal wound ;
"Is it a mortal stab?" Lord Nelson said,
The doctor answered not, but shook his head.
"Go then, said Nelson. leave me to my fate ;
Attend to those whose hope gives longer date."
The battle now raged sore throughout the line ;
In all the ships did dreadful carnage shine.
The French and Dons fought hard in their defence,
While victory seemed as held in dread suspense.
At last the combined fleets their fears display,
No longer doubtful fate hung o'er the day,
When Nelson to the deck for Hardy sent,
To hear from him what way the contest went,
"My Lord," says Hardy, "things auspicious look,
Full fifteen colours are already struck."
"I'm satisfied, in victory's arms I die ;
My body hence in Westminster shall lie.
Pray, do not think my destiny severe,
My grateful country will a trophy rear—
'Tis all I crave of her—all I desire,—
Adieu !" then did in Hardy's arms expire.
This sad event was to the fleet made known,
By his broad flag being lowered to half-mast down.
But this no time in sorrow to bemoan,
Each one's engaged with feelings all his own.
Though now the centre line no warfare waged,
Still in the wings the furious conflict raged !
But British ships so hot their broadsides ply,
That six more combined ships for quarter cry.
Thus closed the battle that auspicious day,
And twenty-one to the British arms gave way.
Far other scenes must now our strains employ,
The signal's made the prizes to destroy ;
The breeze, late light, increases to a gale,,
The injured ships no longer can make sail ;

Their danger's greater than it was before,
They now are threatened by a leeward shore!
The gale increases, furious raged the sea,
And frowning capes, and shelves beneath their lee.
And now dark night involves the lowering sky;
The vivid lightning's flash alternate fly;
Along the shore the thunder loud rebounds,
Hell yawns, rocks echo, and the deep resounds;
Whilst language fails, conception faint may dream
The awful horrors of that midnight scene.
Now morning, glimmering through the dusky clouds,
To their astonished view their state unshrouds;
The gale increasing with a boisterous sea,
The shelving rocks of Spain beneath their lea.
Nature may smile to hail enlivening morn,
With all the beauties which her train adorn;
Imparting joy around the happy plains,
Dispensing health among the rustic swains;
But navies, toiling on a boisterous main,
Beset with dangers, labouring to regain
Some safe retreat, to shun the tempest's rage,
No rays can cheer their fears, or toils assuage;
Great source of light no gladsome beams display,
Nor mock their labours with thy living ray,
Whilst roaring oceans rage their hulls beneath,
And jarring elements contend with death.
For three long nights and days the fleets withstood
The grievous tossings of the stormy flood;
When freed from harm and danger, make their way
To an asylum in Gibraltar Bay.
Now they lament their generous Nelson lost,
Their brave Commander, and their country's boast:
But they reflect while thus they mourn his doom,
The heart of every Briton is his tomb.
Vain were th' attempt his actions to run o'er;
His toils severe on many a foreign shore,
Where Polar frosts congeal eternal snows,
Or where the Tropic's scorching sunbeam glows—
Through every clime his glorious fame was known,
Had braved the hardships great of every zone.
These hardships to ennumerate were vain;
His wondrous perils on the raging main.
One instance here his arduous labours show,
And make his fame in vivid colours glow:
In torrid climes, where Nature pants for breath,
And tainted gales, bring pestilence and death,
Nelson had sought, but long had sought in vain,
The still retreating fleets of France and Spain:
When found at last, he crushed them on the flood,
And sealed the awful conquest with his blood.

JOHN ORR

WAS born in Kilbirnie, a small town in the northwest of Ayrshire, in 1814, and is still resident in the place of his birth. His parents having little of this world's gear, he received only a meagre share of schooling, and was apprenticed to the handloom weaving at the age of fourteen. He worked at that industry till he was about thirty years of age, when he obtained his present situation in the then only powerloom factory in the town. His first attempts at verse-making were made about twenty-five years ago. These were written in secret, owing to his unassuming and retiring nature, and his fear of ridicule; for, as he says, "poets were then looked upon by persons in the locality as being afflicted with some mental 'want.'" But the "want," like a deed of darker hue, would not hide, and Mr Orr has long been known as one of the song-makers of the district. In 1874 he published a small collection of his "Poems and Songs" (Ardrossan: Arthur Guthrie). Mr Orr's verses are chiefly of the lyrical order, and many of them were written to suit the passing circumstances that called them forth, with no idea of publication. He is an intense lover of Nature in all her varied moods and works. He is also the naturalist and bird and beast preserver of the town, and has a large collection of "the birds of bonnie Scotland," and many from foreign lands. He is an ardent admirer of the wildflowers—children of the wood and glen—and an enthusiastic cultivator of the more favoured flowers of the garden. The poet is now beyond the three-score-and-ten, yet young at heart as when he first wooed the coy Muse.

THE GOWANS ON THE LEA.

AIR—"*When the kye come hame.*"

O memory ne'er can tine, I ween, the day that's now awa',
When Mary bloom'd sae fresh and fair as flower in sylvan shaw;
But now she's gane for aye, and frae ilka care is free,
I ne'er can meet wi' Mary 'mang the gowans on the lea.
'Mang the gowans on the lea,
'Mang the gowans on the lea,
I ne'er can meet wi' Mary
'Mang the gowans on the lea.

How happy was the time when her spotless heart was young,
And cheerful as the wanton birds that sport the leaves among;
There was music in the breeze, and the smile was in her e'e,
When I kiss'd her rosy cheek 'mang the gowans on the lea.

I hae met her in the lanely glen, where sweet the crawflowers blaw,
When the mavis sang sae sweetly to welcome evening's fa';
Beside the bonnie hawthorn or by the rowan tree,
To spend the gloamin' hours amang the gowans on the lea.

Beside the stately oak that shades the hazels in the glen
I hae waited 'mang the broom in the haunted berry den,
Till the sun set in the west, then my heart was fu' o' glee
When her fairy feet came tripping o'er the gowans on the lea.

Wi' Mary by my side, 'mang the brackens on the knowe,
We've watched the bonnie evening star peep o'er the mountain brow;
She was faultless as the lambkins disporting on the brae,
And peerless as the dew that weets the gowans on the lea.

O lightsome was the time when my Mary on me smiled,
Till darksome grew the blast of the yellow autumn wild,
The waefu' withering blast; O my Mary's ta'en frae me,
And our love is now a dream 'mang the gowans on the lea.

THE AULD SCOTTISH THISTLE.

The auld Scottish thistle that waves on the lea
Is the badge of the heart that would ever be free;
A foe to oppression, a friend to the brave,
That bids man cheer up and ne'er be a slave.

Dear auld Scottish thistle, of fame and renown,
Wi' thy spears for protection to guard thy red crown;

Fam'd emblem of freedom, the crest of the brave,
That tells thy proud son he shall ne'er be a slave.

Long may ye bloom round our dear native shore,
And defy the invader in battle's loud roar;
And wave thy red plume o'er the tomb of the brave,
Where sleeps the bold hero that ne'er was a slave.

Thou true Scottish thistle of Scotland's fair isle,
Thy green arms extend o'er the breadth of the soil;
Let thy motto be—"Touch me not!" long mayst thou wave,
And thy standard of freedom ne'er bend o'er a slave.

KEEN BLAWS THE WIN'.

Keen blaws the win' o'er the wild rocky mountain,
The streams are a' bound in their cauld icy cell;
How chang'd is the time frae the lang days o' summer,
When the moorlands were gay with the red heather bell.
Silent's the song o' the sweet whistling blackbird,
The ring thrush has deserted the peaks o' Blacklaw;
Hameless and cauld is the roost o' the moorcock
'Mang the white-crested wreaths o' the wide-spreading snaw—
In valley and glen.

On the high waterfalls o' the Garnock and Murchan
Shining icicles over the dark chasms hing,
Like a clear crystal forest, wi' boughs and wi' branches,
In the wildest of grandeur to the grey rocks they cling.
But the spring time will come, and prevail o'er the winter,
And the plover come back to its auld mountain hame;
The cranberry craig will be fringed wi' the bracken,
When winter's awa' we hail summer again,
In valley and glen.

GEORGE MUIR SIMPSON,

A BOOKBINDER to trade, was born in Edinburgh in 1844. He had the misfortune to lose his mother when he was a few months old, and his early years were spent partly under the care of a maiden

aunt. His father went to London, and having married again, took his son thither, where he remained for a few years. He returned to Edinburgh, and after working at several occupations, he eventually served his apprenticeship as a bookbinder. His apprenticeship was over when he was barely eighteen, and six months later he married. Four years afterwards he removed to London, where he remained two years, during which time he experienced many trials and hardships. In his native town he now occupies a position of trust, and is widely respected. As is evinced by the subject of many of his poems, his mind has a distinctly religious cast. He has ever had a predilection for poetry, and has written verses since he was very young. In 1882 he published a little volume entitled "Shakespeare Rab, and other Poems." He is an active and intelligent worker in every good cause, and his poetical productions are instinct with a tender, loving, and devout spirit.

RIGHT AND WRONG.

Cross'd and worried, never flurried,
Over trifles light as air;
Pleasant, cheerful, cautious, careful,
Never yielding to despair.
Calm and daring, ever bearing
All reverses with a smile;
Onward pressing, still progressing,
Dignifying honest toil.

Bravely striving and contriving
How to spend a useful life;
Relieving others, friends and brothers,
Who are fainting in the strife.
Ever tending, twisting, bending
Circumstances to our will,
Thus you've learned success is earn'd
More by pith than craft or skill.

Upward soaring, thus ignoring
All the obstacles that rise;

Never waver, honest labour
Must and will secure the prize.
Be decided, undivided
In all you think, and do, and plan;
For example, that's a sample
Of the true and honest man.

Faint and weary, sad and dreary,
Sitting pining all the day,
Planning, scheming, longing, dreaming
Precious hours of life away;
Afraid to venture, peradventure
Fortune may in anger frown;
With zeal abated, thus we're fated
Never to be worth a crown.

Resolving, fretting, then regretting
At the first unlucky hitch;
Without a penny, thus are many
Ever struggling in the ditch.
Mourning, yearning, ever learning,
But without a plan or rule:
Friend, avoid it, spurn, deride it,
'Tis the method of the fool.

A MOTHER'S PLEA.

Oh, dinna cast him aff, guid man,
Oh, dinna shut the door,
Gie him anither chance, guid man,
Hear, hear the tempest roar;
Remember he's oor flesh an' bluid,
Though steep'd in sin an' crime—
Oh, dinna break a mither's heart,
He's mine, guid man, he's mine.

I ken ye've dune yer pairt, guid man,
I ken a' that fu' braw,
He'll maybe tak' a thocht, guid man,
An' mend, wha kens, for a'.
Sae by that love ye vowed to me
In days that's gane lang syne,
Oh, dinna drive him frae my sight,
He's mine, guid man, he's mine.

Nae doot he's been a trial, guid man,
A thorn I'm wae to say,
Fu' mony a tear we've shed, guid man,
Since first he gaed astray;
But tho' he hisna got a name,
Or character to tine,

Oh, dinna turn yer back on him,
He's mine, guid man, he's mine.

Oh, dinna be ower hard, guid man,
Tak' time an' think a wee,
He was in early years, guid man,
A joy to you an' me.
Then if ye winna hear me speak,
Oh, hear the voice Divine,
Hae mercy on the fallen ane,
He's mine, guid man, he's mine.

Noo clasp him to yer breast, guid man,
Let a' the past be gane,
For cauld the heart indeed, guid man,
That winna shield its ain.
Ah yes, he is oor flesh and bluid,
Though steeped in sin an' crime,
Ye winna break a mither's heart,
He's mine, guid man, an' thine.

WHA WAD HARM THE BAIRNIES.

Wha wad harm the bairnies
That's got a heart ava?
They'll a' be men an' women
When we are ta'en awa'.
Ilk word o' love or kindness
Is no cast to the wind,
In after years they'll mind it,
When we're aneath the grund.

Wha wad harm the bairnies,
Or blight their sunny hour?
Through time they'll find the thorn
That's hidden 'neath the flower.
If ye maun scold the bairnies,
See that ye hae a cause,
For ruin aft in manhood
Is traced back to the tawse.

Wha wad harm the bairnies,
Or gie them cause to mourn?
Sune at the irksome wheel o' life
They a' maun tak' a turn.
Sae dinna quench the sunbeams
That's playin' roun' their heid,
It's time enough for sorrow
When we're no here to see'd.

Wha wad harm the bairnies,
Noo prattlin' at oor knee ?
The time will come for sadness,
But noo's the time for glee.
Kiss the rosy lauchin' face,
Caress the curly pow ;
Care fu' sune will wither up
The roses bloomin' now.

Wha wad harm the bairnies
That's toddlin' but an' ben ?
Hae patience wi' the bairnies,
They'll warsle up to men.
Heaven fill their hearts wi' wisdom,
To ken the road that's richt,
Afore the shadows lengthen
Into the dreary nicht.

Wha wad harm the bairnies
That's got a heart ava ?
The hopes o' future blessin',
Sae bonnie and sae braw.
O ! bring them up wi' kindness,
Wha kens what may befa'
Oor ain wee bonnie darlin's
When we are ta'en awa'.

THE SUNDERLAND CATASTROPHE.

16th June, 1883.

What wailing and what weeping,
What agonising prayer ;
What sobbing and what shrieking
Rise on the midnight air.
What kissing and what bending
O'er many a little shroud,
While mother's hearts are breaking,
And strong men sob aloud.

What happy expectations,
What joy pervaded all ;
What little beaming faces
Throng to the fatal hall.
The innocent wee darlings—
Buds bursting into bloom—
Bright dewdrops of the morning
Are verging on the tomb.

What merry little voices,
What innocence is here;
What truthfulness and gladness
Are in their ringing cheer.
But Death, that stern reaper,
With scythe uplifted high,
Hath shorn down the rosebuds
That charmed a parent's eye.

What woe and lamentation,
What tears are seen to flow,
What hopes and longings blighted,
What hurryings to and fro.
Ere yet the morning breaketh,
Ere yet the night hath fled,
How many are caressing
Their dying and their dead.

What once was sweet and lovely,
What once was bright and fair,
Hath perished in a moment,
And plunged us in despair.
O Christ! Thou blessed Shepherd,
Thine aid we would invoke;
Receive our little darlings
As dear lambs of Thy flock.

DAVID LINDSAY,

A NATIVE of Kilmarnock, was born in 1833. He was a shy, retiring child, and did not spend his leisure hours in the usual boyish style. Although he did not care much for the school, he only played the truant on one occasion, and that was to go to the banks of the Kilmarnock river, and with a pair of scissors cut out the coaches and horses printed on his father's handkerchief. He had an early love for the beauties of Nature, and even when he commenced to learn block-printing he often felt his heart sad when he heard the distant bleating of

the young lambs, and wished he could, like them, be permitted to ramble abroad at will. During his meal hours, and in the evenings, he studied "Thomson's Seasons," "Blair's Grave," "Graham's Sabbath," and similar works. Portions of these he committed to memory. Having been about four years at the trade already named, he went to Ireland and joined the Royal Irish Constabulary, in which service he had a long and successful career, commanding for thirteen years the force of the district.

He was also granted by Government the appointment of Ship Inspector, which office he was allowed by the Lord-Lieutenant to retain, on his retirement in 1880. Mr Lindsay, in addition to his poetical faculty, is also a botanist of some standing, and besides possessing a distinct musical gift, he paints effectively in oil and water colours. For a quarter of a century he has contributed poetry and sketches to the newspapers and magazines, and we are told that several of his sacred compositions have been sung in Dublin Cathedral. His poems are generally reflective, and exhibit pure literary taste, and considerable descriptive power.

THE MOUNTAIN STREAM.

I climb the heath-clad ridge. Oh, what a scene!
Mountains arise like giants to my view—
Dark woods and granite rocks that peep between
Like ruin'd castles in the ambient blue:
The valleys filled with alder, ash, and yew,
In warm harmonious colourings that blend
In verdant richness, whilst a straggling few
Dwarf'd birches lift their snow-white stems and send
Them o'er the crags, and beauty to the picture lend.

The moss spreads cushion'd by each tiny rill,
Flow'rs look like stars in the pale ev'ning sky,
Each scattered stone and crimson heath-turf fill
The mind with wonder and delight the eye:
The rushes grow with brown flags half-mast high,
In pensive sympathy of solitude;

Here nature teaches me unconsciously
Her lessons, and I wish my soul imbu'd
Learning her statutes by the mountain springs bedew'd.

Sweet-scented heath-ferns gem the streamlet's side,
As bright it courses on its onward way :
Each object has an interest—how wide
The restless ripples o'er its surface play :
Full-ton'd its voice is heard from day to day,
For from each stone a symphony does ring
In ceaseless cadence, like an infant's lay ;
Ah, 'tis the pulse-throb of the mountain spring !
In nature's rhythm how sweet, how grandly does it sing.

Hill beyond hill uprears its crest aloft,
Snow-capt like billows on a frozen sea—
All seems a different world, and full oft
I turn to scan the village home, which I
Had left at morn, nestling so beauteously,
With whitewash'd cots, grey bridge, and splashing brook ;
My eye feeds on each summit, ev'ry tree,
On smiling vale, or tarn, and as I look
I linger, and enshrine them all in mem'ry's book.

What myriad wondrous objects round me lie,
As slowly o'er the mountain paths I wind ;
Scar'd plover startl'd utters piercing cry—
A solitary charm now fills my mind :
I hear the hum of bees, and feel inclined
To rest ; the languid song of birds ; each sound
Is fraught with thought, so that I could but find
A key to myst'ries evermore profound—
Nature's arcana then would surely be unbound.

Blythely the vocal current glides along
Its moss-lin'd bed above the boiling linn,
As if in tend'rest notes some Naiad's song
Is heard—but hark ! her white feet now begin
To twinkle, causing burnished sparks to spin
Adown the cataract impetuously,
The water tumbling with o'erpow'ring din
Amongst the boulders, whilst the rocks close by
Are ting'd with gift of richest, deepest em'rald dye.

. . . . . .

How still the far stretched sheep walks lie—how free
And pure the vault of gloried blue—save here
And there a soft cloud-chequer'd spot. The lea
And wold embrace the shadows, which, howe'er,
An instant stay, then flit, and disappear !

Oh, fairy landscape! picture-study, too!
Brighter in varied light and shade, whilst near
The 'trancing tints gleam in th' empyrean view—
Forecast of heav'n and earth that God shall yet make new.

AUTUMN REFLECTIONS.

The pathways thick are strewn with brownéd leaves,
And bright autumnal skies emblend with grey,
The reapers toil amid the golden sheaves,
Slow drags the clattering team along the way;
I linger, and with glist'ning eye survey
The stubble-plains that now are swept so bare,
Feeling as if subliming sorrow lay
O'er all I see—some shadowed reflex there
Of man! emblem of changing seasons ev'rywhere.

Sear-leaved decline does o'er the woodlands steal,
The faded flowers lie with'ring at my feet,
Their robes of beauty gone; no charms reveal
By bank or field-path, or by hedge-row sweet;
No vernal perfume scents the lone retreat,
The summer's shimmer from the fields has fled;
Nature awaits the hours that shall complete
The lasting year—with sympathy I tread
The wreaths of fallen grass that greenless are and dead.

The autumn lingers, but how sadd'ningly
The earth appears pall'd o'er by wan decay;
Yet in that sadness immortality
Is whispered, and the living seem to say—
"Spring shall again return—each leafless spray
Shall wave in Nature's sheen of summer dress,
For winter's surly storms shall pass away,
And the warm zephyrs shall again caress
The flow'rs that wait her smile to bloom in loveliness!"

The landscape's sparsely dotted still with gold,
Not flashing now, though still in glory drest,
The ferns have rusted like the iron when old,
And russet is the beech by stern behest;
The mountain ash, like sunset in the west,
With clust'ring scarlet berries all aglow,
Deep is the quietude bespeaking rest—
There's grandeur in each paling tint; but, lo!
Deep in my heart a sadness I but too well know.

The birds, preparatory to their flight,
Make noisy circuits round the old church vane,
Or swiftly dart through air and then alight,
And will not with us longer now remain,

But leave for warmer latitudes again.
The thrush and blackbird silent long have been,
The redbreast's notes but speak of dark'ning rain,
The lark at intervals is heard, I ween,
But migrate visitants no longer now are seen.

The flocks of fleecy clouds move surely past,
And from beneath each shade a glinting ray
Flickers an instant, and its beams doth cast
On field and woods along through which I stray,
Causing alternate gloom and gleam to play
On the glad colours waning I behold;
The tinges deepen as I turn away
From erst rich garniture of vale and wold
That Cornucopia's stores profusely now unfold.

The amber sunset tops the distant wood
That forms a compact bank against the light,
The restless rooks return in clam'rous mood
From foraging, and settle for the night;
The rising moon peeps over yonder height
Of stilled trees that throw their dark shades deep
Across the stream unruffled. All is quiet,
Save drooping leaves, and chestnut fronds that keep
Falling at intervals, and waken birds from sleep.

The years move round, familiar to us all,
By slow gradations, scarce we note each change;
The evening shadows swiftly round us fall,
The days grow short, and on yon mountain range
The crisp white snow we see, nor think it strange
The lighted eves should us again invite
To social joys within the homely grange,
Where pleasant tales beguile the winter's night,
And pure domestic comforts minister delight.

Man has his seasons. Spring-tide paths ope fair,
And dazzling hope bespells the youthful mind.
Enchantment! ah! how exquisitely rare!
His summer comes, and yet deceived may find
Him led by thoughts ambitious, and inclin'd
To crest that hill on which so few shall stand!
His autumn finds all false and more unkind—
Dimm'd eyes, blanch'd hair; then winter's icy hand,
Sequence of all, bids death lead to the unseen land.

FLOWERS OF THE LEA.

Up, from the death of winter, flow'rs arise,
With joy the earth laughs out in green and gold;
And buds glint from their graves, and do unfold
Leaves that englow 'neath breath of summer skies.

Fair virgin snow-drop with the tearless eye,
In robe of whitest purity thou'rt drest—
In shelter of the woods thou bloomest best—
I love thee, flow'ret of adversity.

For thou, meek nursling of the winter storms,
Appear'st before thy sisters show their stems
From out the hidden nooks, like glitt'ring gems,
Emblaz'ning in the radiant air their forms.

The yellow catkins on the waters lave,
And milk-white stars upon the sloe are seen ;
Ere yet the leaves appear in lustrous sheen,
Or meadow-sweet hangs o'er the brooklet's wave.

What charm to ramble in the blooming time,
And scent the fragrance of the dewy dell ;
When zephyrs kiss the slender-stem'd blue bell,
That gently rings its sweet cerulean chime.

Ah ! glorious Nature, thy disturbless shades
I've courted oft ; far from the haunts of men,
By hazel coppice or dark-wooded glen,
Ere day departs and glistening landscape fades.

Now thou'st adorned—it is thy bridal hour—
Sweetly the mavis sings beside her nest ;
And brighter is the robin's crimson vest
Beneath the genial green of leafy bower.

In shimm'ring constellations now appear
The saxifrage and vernal purple squill ;
The heartsease and the golden daffodil,
While cowslip and the primrose, too, are here.

The lea flow'rs sparkle in the golden ray,
The clover ripples in one waving mass ;
Touch'd by the amber cloudlets as they pass,
The surface sways while transient shadows play.

There is a wise design in wayside weed,
As mark'd as in the noblest forest trees ;
And flow'rs that richly load the perfum'd breeze
Pure lessons teach—so "he that runs may read !"

The tiniest, po'sied, waxen cup, and all
The tints engilt on every rock and stone ;
By moss or lichen stained—all grandly own
The writing of God's finger on the wall.

WILLIAM BURNS

WAS born at Clackmannan in 1825. When fourteen years of age he was apprenticed as a sailor, and made a voyage to Russia. In the course of a second voyage he met with an accident, which was the means of ending his connection with the sea. He afterwards learned the business of a wood carver in Glasgow, and ultimately removed to Stirling, and carried on business till his health broke down. Thirteen years ago our poet got a situation in the Locomotive Department of the Caledonian Railway Company, which position he still occupies. Mr Burns has always had a keen appreciation of the beauties of poetry, and at one time wrote numerous thoughtful and melodious poems and songs. Of late, however, his lyre has been almost silent. The specimens of his Muse given by Mr Beveridge in the "Poets of Clackmannanshire," and those he has submitted for our consideration, prove that the pathos of humble life and the beauties of Nature are the source of much of his inspiration. These are felt and appreciated by his warm imagination, and moulded into sweet and elevating verse.

THE GRINDER.

We are grinders one and all, ajogging o'er life's road,
Following the wheel of our fortunes we plod,
The world has its pleasures as well as its care,
Though the one will come unbidden, if the other you would share.

Then don't sit and grumble and rail against fate,
Make the most of the world as you find her,
Keep birling round your wheel, and the merrier you drive,
The happier you'll be, says the grinder.

It is not ease and luxury win the laurel and the bay,
The heart that broods in discontent blights every blissful ray;
The willing labour of the hands, and the labour of the brain,
While sweating over useful toil, the fullest measure gain.
Then don't sit, etc.

Who do the deeds so grand and brave which wake the genial fire,
And thrill the world's heart of hearts in rapture to admire?
Not those who grudge the success by their neighbours fairly won,
Nor will it be by you, unless you work as they have done.
Then don't sit, etc.

Then cherish independence—true nobility of soul,
Respect yourselves, but never seek your neighbour to control,
What's his, is his, don't trample on, nor rob him of his right,
But manfully, and honestly, and fair your battles fight.
Then don't sit, etc.

Courageously endeavour life's prizes fair to gain,
And should you fail, why! don't despair, be faithful, try again;
Not by the strong the battle aye, nor the swift the race is won,
Yet victory ne'er can be for those who neither fight nor run.
Then don't sit, etc.

Let all your aims be generous, be noble, good, and true,
And gallantly resolve to dare, yes! both to dare and do;
Thus conquer cankered discontent, and then, my friends, you'll find
Your happiness will bless the more, the merrier you grind.

So don't sit and grumble, and rail against fate,
Make the most of the world as you find her;
Keep birling round your wheel, and the merrier you drive,
The happier you'll be, says the grinder.

THE WEE BIRDIE'S WHISTLE.

When a' the lift abune is mirk,
And big clouds darkly lower,
And pelting fa' the heavy draps
O' sorrow's thunder shower;
Aye look abune wi' confidence
And succour ye'll descry;
For a wee birdie whistles
There's sunshine in the sky.

When through the lang and lanely hours
Ye weary watch and dread,
And dool sits heavy on the heart,
And dizzy grows the head;
Tak' comfort frae the thought and trust
Your troubles soon will fly,
For a wee birdie whistles
There's sunshine in the sky.

Tho' you've been nursed in poortith's lap,
Thus meikle ye should ken,
The man wha's just and mercifu'
The noblest is o' men ;
Then manfully keep up your head,
Ne'er snool and whine, nor cry,
For a wee birdie whistles
There's sunshine in the sky.

If fast ye rin wi' fortune's tide,
Trim weel the swelling sail,
The breeze that's blawin' saft the noo
May turn into a gale ;
Clip close the wings o' scornfu' pride,
For fear it flee owre high,
For the wee birdie whistles
There's prudence in the sky.

If rich in gear and strong in power,
Be mercifu' as weel,
Nor dare to crush the poor beneath
A proud despotic heel ;
Howe'er exalted you will hear,
In tones baith stern and high,
A wee birdie whistle
There's vengeance in the sky.

Baith high and low o'er a' the earth
Hae duties on them laid,
Then kindly lend a helpin' hand—
Your strugglin' brither aid ;
The rich may help the poor, the poor
May not the rich envy,
For a wee birdie whistles,
A wee birdie whistles,
A wee birdie whistles,
There's justice in the sky.

ODE ON DESIGN.

On Contemplating a Collection of Ornamental Designs Drawn with Pencil.

Forms of the beautiful, from whence are ye?
And whence your power to please?
Ye chaste conceptions of the fertile brain,
Woven in the loom of intellect by God ordained,
And therefore true descendants of the great I AM.

Faint, ephemeral-looking things are ye,
Lines traced upon a tissue,

That with a sweep may be effaced,
Nor shadow leave to show ye e'er existed,
But while ye live inherent grace compels,
The mind and eye on beauty pleased to linger.

Of these perchance the world may never know;
But who their beauties scan their charms may feel,
And bless the pleasures graceful forms can give,
Or if with intent seeking more to know,
We down into their deepest nature peer,
And there discern their author's Author,
And the heaven-born impulse He implanted to create.

No deeper source than that from whence ye sprung
Could e'er be claimed by aught that e'er existed;
The universal harmony which reigns, thou art—
The essence of the world's constructive plan,
And all that lives, and moves, and being hath,
Thou guid'st; and Thee to know
The knowledge is supreme of mightiest intellect.

The sciences we boast but point thy ways—
At best a learned shred—our ignorance more profound,
And incapacity to comprehend proclaims
The paltry insignificance of man's boasted learning.

Go, Athiest, go! and ponder on design;
With humble reverence bow before its origin,
And in it recognize the truth's omnipotence—
No more to doubt there is a God.

THE LARK.

Soaring, thou singest
  Joyous and proud,
Rolling thy melody
  Back from the cloud;
Sweet minstrel of ether
  Unto thee is given
To draw us in sympathy
  Nearer to heaven.

List'ning in rapture,
  Thy lay streaming o'er us,
Thrilling the bosom
  Thy rich swelling chorus;
Far in the sunny beams
  Pouring it forth,
Unveiling a vision
  More glorious than earth.

Emotions in harmony
  Tender shall flow,
Enchanting the spirits
  Of mortals below.
Entranced by the joy
  Of thy wild warbling strain,
Oh, sing, bird, and never
  Cease singing again.

THERE'S AYE SOME BIT NEUK THAT HAS COMFORT TO GIE.

In the cold shades of life though the lot may be cast,
And dowie the present as cheerless the past,
While nought in the future but poortith may be,
There's aye some bit neuk that has comfort to gie.

Should prospects be drear 'ne'th misfortune's dark cloud,
As Nature when wrapt in a cold, icy shroud,
Whiles the sun through a rift may blink and let's see
Some kindly bit neuk that has comfort to gie.

Though snell winter strip the trees leafless and bare,
And wee birds think summer will never come mair,
Yet again will the buds come, and flowers on the lea,
Sae we'll get some bit neuk that has comfort to gie.

The callous may prance on through life's mazy reel,
Whose bosoms no touch of kind sympathy feel;
They may sink 'mid its pressure, or drowned e'en may be,
And at last hae nae neuk that has comfort to gie.

The heart that can feel, and the mind uncontrolled,
May revel in riches though lacking of gold;
While with friends who are faithful we ever can flee
To some blythesome neuk that has comfort to gie.

Though the road may be rough and eerie to gang,
We will try with contentment to make it less lang;
And should Fortune ne'er gie us her favour to pree,
We will find some bit neuk that has comfort to gie.

Then flinch not, brave hearts, while the battle may last—
The victory be thine when the struggle is past;
And the glory comes streaming from over life's sea,
To illumine a neuk evermore unto thee.

WALTER TOWERS,

AUTHOR of a neat volume of very pleasing "Poems, Songs, and Ballads" (Glasgow: A. Bryson & Co., 1885) was born at Carronshore, a village in Stirlingshire. His forefathers were farmers for about three hundred years in the eastern district of that county. Walter's early days were spent in the neighbourhood of Falkirk. A friend informs us that when a boy on one occasion he was nearly killed by falling from a tree, and soon after he was almost drowned in the Forth and Clyde Canal. These accidents were followed by his being struck down by fever, so that although an apt scholar, his early education was frequently interrupted by sickness. He was always passionately fond of flowers, and cultivated them intelligently in his own little garden, while at the same time birds, rabbits, cats and dogs came in for an ample share of his love. These feelings and sympathies have naturally exercised an influence over his poetical utterances, and his adoration of the beautiful in animate and inanimate nature. Indeed he clearly draws much of his inspiration from the highest and noblest of human sympathies and filial affection.

In his preface to the volume already alluded to he tells us that the contents are the result of pleasant musings in leisure hours. He at present follows the calling of a patternmaker in Glasgow, and hence the sphere of his labour "limits the opportunity of extensively cultivating the acquaintanceship of the Muses. If by his utterances a faint heart be made strong, or a weary one refreshed, he will not consider the labour bestowed upon their production altogether fruitless." Mr Tower's poetry manifests spontaniety of flow, occasional quaint pathos, and an imagination that can produce pictures of poetic beauty.

WAR.

War, war, horrible war!
How my heart bleeds, as I think what you are;
Thousands of men hurried forth to be slain,
Studding the hill-side and filling the plain.
Father of Mercy, oh! teach us to see
Battles and murders are punished by Thee.
Men of the time,
Think of the crime;
Need it be so in our century's chime.

War, war, terrible war!
Hate and destruction are yoked in thy car;
Sweeping in fatal, delirious haste,
Laying a country in ruin and waste;
What tongue could tell all the ills you have wrought,
Culling your victims from palace and cot?
Brisk yet thy trade,
Deep dyed thy blade,
Where then the boasted advancement we've made?

War, war, mis'rable war!
Loud are thy wailings, and heard near and far;
Parents lamenting the loss of their sons,
Widows the lot of their fatherless ones;
See the poor wretch escape from the strife,
Shattered and ruin'd, or crippled for life;
Alas for the prize
And honour that lies
Drenched in a deluge of mis'ry and sighs.

War, war, hideous war!
Game of the devils! God's progress to bar;
Who dares to think he has Heaven on his side
Moved by the lust of ambition and pride;
A voice from the dark, hoary annals of time
Tells us aggression was ever a crime.
Hell waits those who seek
To plunder the weak,
And Heaven alone for the honest and meek.

THE AULD MAN.

The auld man, the auld, auld man,
That dressed sae douce and plain,
We'll never see his kindly smile,
Or hear his voice again;
For the Maister saw his work was done,
And bade an angel ca',

And tak' his faithfu' servant hame
To the Far, Far Awa'.

His bairns' bairns come frae the schule,
And clamber on his chair.
But sair their wee hearts miss the smile
O' him ance sitting there.
They've sought him lang by Lady's Mill,
And doon through Abbot's-haugh;
And wonder aye what road he'll come
Frae the Far, Far Awa'.

The few friends left o' lang, lang syne
Find nane to tak' his place;
For deed, they say, the folks to-day
Are but a fickle race.
And as they think on bygane days,
A tear will tricklin' fa'
For him, their auld, auld trusty friend,
In the Far, Far Awa'.

His faither's faither, a farmer guid,
Was busy reein' beans,
When Charlie sent doon Fa'kirk braes
His Camerons and M'Leans.
But oh! the din o' clashin' swords
He couldna thole ava,
His ways were peacefu', like the King's
In the Far, Far Awa'.

O, the auld man, the auld, auld man,
Left little gear to claim;
But better still, the guid auld man
Has left a spotless name.
And the Maister looks wi' longing e'e
Frae His Love-Lichted Ha',
And sets his faithfu' servant doon
In the Far, Far Awa'.

CHILDHOOD.

Little, laughing, loving child—
Sweet as cherub, undefiled,
Pure as lily, chaste as rose,
Innocence and love's repose;
Love that none can know without thee,
None can ever taste who doubt thee,
Ever tasting can forget thee,
And the calm that doth beset thee;
Jesus said in accents mild—
"Heaven is like a little child."

See the snowdrop wreathed in snow,
See the tender crocus blow ;
Weaklings both, yet first to bring
Tidings of reviving spring.
And the little ones who love us
Teach us there's a power above us :
So let us be simple minded,
Nor to this great truth be blinded :
Jesus said in accents mild—
" Heaven is like a little child."

MEET ME, MY LOVE.

AIR—" *O for the Bloom o' my ain Native Heather*"

Meet me, my love, on the banks o' the Avon ;
Meet me whaur nane but the wee birdies ken,
Doon by the rock sheltered bield o' the raven ;
Doon in the glen, my love, doon in the glen.

Come when the bright rays o' day are departin' ;
Come when the lark sings in rapture abune,
Ere the far west spreads its rich purple curtain,
Ere the last hour o' the lown afternoon.

Come by the burn-side that skirts the gay meadow,
Step doon the bank by the hawthorn tree ;
There I shall get the first glimpse o' yer shadow—
Shadow indeed, but the world to me.

Then in the sweet hinny hours o' the gloamin',
Hid in a flowery recess o' the glen ;
Kisses I'll get frae thee, fairest o' women,
Kisses that mak' me the proudest o' men.

OOR WEE JOCKIE.

AIR—" *Green Grow the Rashes, O !*"

Folks tell me in a flatterin' way
Oor bairn is like his daddie, O,
But surely he was never sic
A harum-scarum laddie, O.

Chorus.—Oor wee Jockie, O,
Oor wee Jockie, O,
The wildest loon in a' the toon,
A cunning little rogue, O.

The first on fit, at screech-o'-day,
A-skirlin' for his coggie, O,
The last at nicht in jingo ring,
Among them a' sae vogie, O.

Deck him wi' gutcher's boots and hat,
And guid'am's book and glasses, O;
He looks as proud's a dominie
Presidin' ower his classes, O.

Where'er he spies a washin' tub,
He rins like ony hatter, O,
And makes wee Allie's doll or hat
His steamboat in the water, O.

He plagues his uncle's very life,
Aboot his pouches pokin', O,
To get his pipe, then strikes a light,
And briskly fa's a smokin', O.

And for a bawbee, oh, the pranks!
He'll whistle, dance, and caper, O:
Then off for candy, and steal back,
And burke you wi' the paper, O.

He's awfu' gleg for ane sae young—
But twa years and a quarter, O,
My sang, wha kens, he yet may wear
A ribbon, star, and garter, O!

I ever pray he ne'er may fa',
But bear his head fu' cockie, O;
And dae, as some great men hae done—
Adorn the name o' Jockie, O.

JOHN T. COUTTS,

AUTHOR of "The Carrick Campaign, and other Poems," was born at West Linton in 1824. After the usual course of preparation he became schoolmaster at Elphinstone, in the Parish of Tranent, where he became a successful and popular teacher.

Mr Coutts died in 1869, at the comparatively early age of forty-five years.

His volume was published in Edinburgh by John Greig & Son in 1861, and the poem which gives the book its name is a traditional account of King Robert Bruce's achievements for the independence of Scotland. The narrative begins with Bruce's landing at Turnberry Castle early in the spring of 1307, and concludes with the complete defeat of the enemy at Loudoun Hill on the 10th May of the same year. It is a spirited production, full of poetical and national fervour, and contains much that is interesting both of an historical and traditional nature. We give the opening lines, entitled

FREEDOM.

O Freedom! how precious and blest is thy reign!
What glories abound in thy blessed domain!
They brilliantly blaze like a comet's bright flame,
And a radiance of glory encircles thy name.
The land of our fathers has long been thy home;
Our dark heather mountains encircle thy throne;
On their blue towering summits thy banners wave free,
Like the bright flashing rays on the face of the sea.
Ay, here thou has reigned in effulgence sublime,
That's lost in the far distant ages of time;
No records can tell when thou first gav'st thy hand
In wedlock to Scotland, our high favoured land.
Thy mountains, the ramparts of freedom and fame,
Thy sons are the bulwarks that guard thy domain;
We're the sons of the mighty, our name is far spread,
The terror of tyrants, their scourge and their dread.
In ages far gone, when usurpers had sworn,
That thy glory and pride from thy throne should be torn,
'Twas then thy brave heroes arose in their might,
Like suns in their glory diffusing their light.
Those heroes immortal, those stars of renown,
Triumphantly fought for thy sceptre and crown;
Like gods in their greatness they crushed down thy foe
To the region of darkness and silence below;
And thy standard they planted for ever to bloom,
And a radiance of glory it sheds o'er their tomb.
Their brilliant achievements, their devotion sublime,
Have rolled and shall roll down the ocean of time;
Like streams in the deserts that gloriously blaze,

They refresh and enrapture our minds with their rays.
But amid those brave nights, one excell'd them by far,
Who gloriously blazed like a bright morning star—
'Twas the dauntless King Robert, who won Scotland's crown,
And stamped it with glory and lasting renown.
His name and his worth are embalmed in our soul;
And while in our hearts life's current will roll,
Our bosoms will swell in gratitude's strains,
To the champion of freedom who broke slavery's chains.

THE SKIRMISH OF CUMNOCK.

The clouds had passed away, and the blue skies
Were sparkling with ten thousand eyes.
Quick flashed the northern lights in bright attire,
Like the reflection of some mighty fire
That raged along the frigid zone. Soft blew
The vernal breeze, and sweetly fann'd the new
Blown leaves. A gentle frost had sharped the air,
And beautified the night. Divinely fair
All nature smiled, and seemed to breathe a tale
Of love to man. The gallant king did hail
The glorious prospect and the sweet serene
That reigned around. But different was the scene
That reigned within his warriors' breasts, for there
A storm of wrath did rage, that soon would bear
Destruction in its course; each had a friend,
A brother, or a sire's blood, and a thousand
Wrongs to avenge. Across the moor they plied
Their eager steps, and Cumnock's site descried.
Thin wreaths of smoke above the hamlet hang;
No glimmering light was seen, and no sound rang
Upon their ears. The dwellers had retired
To rest; tranquility was full attired
With a devotional aspect on her throne,
But for a period soon to be o'erthrown
By war's appalling sounds. He stood and formed
His men in war's array; and when performed
He blew the trump of war, and loud arose
His cry, "The Bruce, the Bruce," and broke the sweet repose.

No trumpet's blast the foe returned, but from
Their campments rushed in arms, to face the storm
Of war. They linked themselves in firm array,
And with a measured tread they marched away
To advantageous ground, and stood to meet
The shock of arms. Their tread was music sweet
To Bruce's ears. He hastily advanced
To the attack; and as he dimly glanced
Along their line, he thought their number might
Exceed his own. "Now there's a gallant sight,

My men," said he, "they've hunted well to-day
For war, and now they'll have it. Douglas, play
Your archery on their front, and let them feel
Our feathered shafts, and then our polished steel
They'll have for a dessert." The darts swift sprang
From the propelling yews, and loudly rang
Amid the southron ranks : confusion told
They had performed their part. The monarch rolled
With his protruding spears upon his foes,
And loud the crash of arms and shouts arose,
Like a ship's crash upon a headland rock
When rent into a thousand parts. The shock
Of arms and shouts again arose, and rang
Awhile ; then all was still, except the clang
Of peaceful arms, the shrieks of death,
And the quick steps of those that fled across the heath.

THE ANGEL OF DEATH HOVERS OVER ME NOW.

No more shall I see the sweet beauties of Spring,
No more shall I feel the soft breezes she'll bring ;
But she will return, and will breathe the perfume,
To nurse the tall grass that will wave o'er my tomb.

The angel of death hovers over me now ;
The cold dews of death have enveloped my brow ;
The grave will be yawning most widely aghast ;
And corruption is thirsting to have his repast.

How lonely the churchyard, the home of the dead,
Where thousands lie mingled in one common bed !
They slumber in silence—a silence profound—
That nothing can break but the last trumpet's sound.

At death shall I tremble, though I fall by his sting ?
Ah, no ! I shall triumph on faith's cheerful wing.
The dark floods of death have no terror to me,
For Christ is my pilot on that stormy sea.

In Him I repose who's almighty to save ;
Who triumphed o'er Satan, the world, and the grave,
And ascended to heaven, the Champion of love,
To welcome His saints to His mansions above.

THOMAS CONDIE TYRIE,

WHOSE poems have been admired by Lord Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Canon Farrar, George Gilfillan, and other high authorities, was born in Edinburgh in 1853, and died in his native city in 1876. His father, Thomas Condie Tyrie, and his mother, Jessie M'Dougall, both natives of Perthshire, were, at the time of his birth, engaged in business in Edinburgh, but on the formation of the Museum of Science and Art, in 1856, Mr Tyrie was the first employee on the staff of that important institution—a position which he still holds under the Crown. Having his residence in the Museum, the young poet was brought up within its walls, and saw much of the "inner side" of Science and Art, of which he was a keen observer and a diligent and intelligent student. He received his elementary education at the school in connection with the Church of Scotland Training College, after which he served four years as a pupil teacher in the Canongate Burgh School. Subsequently he went two sessions to the University, attending the Arts Classes. Being anxious, however, to see a little more of the world, and do something for his own support, he accepted a situation as one of the Masters of St Stephen's School for Boys, Westbourne Park, London.

He remained in this situation for fifteen months, returning to Edinburgh in the autumn of 1874, when he resumed his studies till Christmas for the purpose of completing his curriculum in the Arts. It was, however, otherwise ordained. He had imbibed the seeds of the disease that was soon to prove fatal—pulmonary consumption, brought on by over-work and too hard study. He gradually grew weaker, till, on the 11th April, 1876, his earthly education was completed,

and the bright hopes of fond parents for their only surviving son, and of a wide circle of admiring literary friends were all crushed by his early death. But his memory is still fresh and fragrant.

> Sweet Spirit, art thou gone? Has gentle Death,
> By sad Consumption led, and slow Decay,
> Wafted thy soul to where a purer day
> Is thrilled with music of immortal breath,
> And the cool brightness of enduring ray?
> Surely thy peaceful presence filled with light
> Death's gloomy vale—that sad and silent way,
> Looming in solemn grandeur like the night
> Before the glories of th' Eternal Dawn!
> For sure yon radiant rainbow sweetly drawn
> By God's own hand from earth to sunny sky,
> That gleams, then fades like star in early light,
> Perfect and pure in angel-majesty,—
> Is not more sweet, more calm, more bright than thee!
>
> —*In Memoriam: Thomas Tyrie,*
> *By Rev. David Williamson.*

As an example of his prose, and of his susceptible and imaginative mind, the following extracts from a letter written to his friend and brother poet, the Rev. David R. Williamson, of Kirkmaiden, will be read with interest. He says—"I only hope you may never feel as I have felt during my prolonged weakness;—the crushing sense of impotence that comes over one, when the frame cannot support the mind;—when the hand can no longer execute what the soul, actively as ever, desires and conceives;—the quick life tied to the dead form,—the ideas, fresh as immortality, rushing forth rich and golden; and the broken nerves, and the shattered frame, and the weary eyes! The spirit athirst for liberty and Heaven, and the consciousness that we are walled up and imprisoned in a dungeon! Talk not of freedom;—there is no such thing in a man whose body is the gaol, whose infirmities are the racks of his genius. When one has once tasted of the sweetness which the soul experiences from the rapt and secret confessions of the heart, poured out, it may be, in valueless essays in com-

position; and has experienced the transport, the intoxication, felt by all in their early efforts; how great must be the thraldom which puts all under subjection! And, oh! what a luxury is there in that first love—particularly of the Muse!—that process by which we give, for the first time, a palpable form to the long intangible visions which have flitted across us;—the beautiful ghost of the ideal within, which is invoked in the Gadara of the still closet, with the wand of the simple pen! To write is not a vague desire, but an imperious destiny. The fire is kindled, and *must* break forth. The communication of thought to man is implanted as an instinct in those minds to which Heaven has assigned the solemn agencies of genius. For it is not everyone who can feel the glow of the setting sun, or be impressed with the song of a bird, or the heaving of a glittering wave. As across a dark, verdureless field, will often blow a breeze thro' the heart of Winter, which will wake in the patient mind not a memory merely, but a prophecy of the Spring, with a glimmer of snowdrop, or crocus, or primrose; so, across the waste of tired endeavour will a gentle hope, coming he knows not whence, breathe Spring-like upon the heart of the man around whom life looks waste and dreary."

Mr Tyrie wrote occasional prose articles and poems for several well known magazines and literary journals. His poetical utterances are carefully thought out, and evince fine cultured critical accumen, as well as sound philosophy. They are artistically and naturally expressed, and full of warm affection and wide human sympathies. We trust the day is not far distant when his "literary remains" will be gathered together, and presented to the world in book form.

GOING HOME.

Open the window; the bright sunbeams glisten
Like golden-winged birds on the leaves of the trees;

Open the window, and, sister dear, listen
  Again as from heaven comes the voice on the breeze;
Yes, yes, sister dearest, I hear a glad chorus,
  And this seems the song that is breathed on the air—
"The glorious kingdom of love lies before us;"
  And, sister, dear sister, we soon shall be there.

One voice in the chorus distinctly grows nearer;
  'Tis mother's; she calls me her darling again;
The same gentle music; but sensibly clearer;
  O death! thou has lost thy last terror and pain.
I hear it; my soul will not part with the token
  That she will be yonder to welcome me home,
Where never a heart by a false tone is broken,
  Oh, listen, the voice sings more audibly, come!

And round me, above me, swells higher the chorus,
  The sunlight grows brighter, the blue sky more fair;
The golden gates, sister, swing open before us;
  The music grows louder; we soon shall be there.

A DREAM OF A DREAM.

Oh, for a bed of buttercups, to rest
  Therein, and watch the summer swallows pass,
And see the meadow-flowers I love the best
  Among the fairy forests of the grass,
    That I might seem,
      Without regret,
    In a fair dream
      Of Margaret:
To hold her white, warm hand, and read her smile,
And feel her kiss again beside the stile.

Oh, for one hour underneath a hedge,
  With boughs of full bloom, May-blooms overhead,
Clear water blowing bubbles in the sedge,
  And waving weeds above its pebble bed,
    To sink down deep,
      With sun above,
    And have in sleep
      This dream of love—
Of love that was, and may not be again;
Of dear heart-love before it grew to pain.

If the delusion old delight could bring,
  And let me hear the gentle maiden voice
Speak what was spoken once to me, and sing
  The song that made my soul wake to rejoice—

Tho' after sleep
Came aching truth,
To bid me weep
In bitter ruth—
Yet would I walk again my shadow'd way
Ten years, to dream the dream another day.

SONG OF THE TWILIGHT.

Mystical odours creep
Thro' shadows weird and dim-blue distances—
Odours the hot day knows not; such as steep
The wearied sense in pure deliciousness,
When poppy-fingered sleep
Hath stilled the importunate stir of waking strife,
Which drowns the soft, low strains that make the accord of life.

Stillness and silence lie
Like voiceless benedictions over all;
There floats no cloud between us and the sky
To stay one star glance; silvery, swift they fall.
Were every star an eye
Of some benignant, white-winged, watchful sprite—
Were surer peace our guard than circles us to-night?

How stirless stand the trees!
Creep closer love, the hour is all our own;
And yet beneath the sky glad silences
The swift spring quick'ning stirs; and I alone,
I know that, as with these,
Though silence robes thee like the night-hushed air,
The love-fire in thy heart is quick'ning unaware.

And, hark! a sudden trill
From forth the circling dusk—a tremulous, low,
Beginning of sweet sound that, though it fill
The ear with quick delight, yet fitteth so
The hush so calm, so still;
One dreams that Peace, long brooding, voiceless long,
With Joy's resistless rapture, thrilleth into song.

It is the bird of night,
Whose song wars not with silence, but accords
With quiet and fair solitude. How bright
This silver-mist moon flooded. Hast no words
To speak serene delight?
Love, let yon warbler's clear and changeful song
Voice that rapt joy that dies to silence on thy tongue.

What ecstacy of heart
Thrills in those mellow flutings ; what uprise
Of pure earth-spurning passion seems to start,
Sound winged, in each swift-fluttering trill that tries
To scale the heavens ! Some part
Of human yearning pulses through the beats
Of that exuberant song which still thy heart repeats.

Say, sweet, is it not so ?
Pure as thy passion, fervent as thy love ?
Now silver shrill, now saintly, soft, and low
As is thy gentle voice, my nestling dove.
The bright and joyous flow
Of thy love-quickened life, shall it not be
Typed by yon rapturous songster's varient melody !

The glamorous grey surrounds
Dim, dusk, soft stretching—silent homes of dreams ;
But lift thine eyes, thro' all the azure bounds
Of heaven the star host rain irradiant gleams.
Oh, season of low sounds
And subtle odour rapt from drowsing flowers,
Foretaste of *what* far peace in *what* Elysian bowers !

Lovely art thou, and love,
Shy love and silent, haunts thee as its home—
The still rapt passion brooding like a dove
At the hidden heart of life. My darling, come ;
Arise, sweet, let us move
Forth in the moon-gleam that thine eyes may tell
Soul secrets that thy pure lips guard so sweetly well.

SUMMER FLOWERS.

Bloom, Summer flowers,
Gleam smile-like o'er the ashen, Wint'ry plain ;
How dark without you seems this earth of ours,
Gladden like angel's eyes our souls again.

For you we wept
Thro' the long darkness of the Winter hours,
While in your mother's breast ye sweetly slept,
Sheltering your infant heads, O lovely flowers.

The lark on high,
Where dwells he in the bosom of the mist,
Hath called ye ; and pale sunbeams, born to die,
Your frost-bound cradle bed have gently kissed.

Come then, at last !
As the Earth's prayers towards high Heaven arise,

Like stars which gazed into the distant past,
And penetrate the present mysteries.

Your blessing may
Remain with us when ye are faded,—gone;
Not vain, as are our lives, which pass away
To cumber earth with an unheeded stone.

Yet from that sod
Shall rise sweet flowers when Spring again descends;
A sweet thank offering not unworthy God,
For the frail temple of the soul He lends.

Bloom, Summer flowers!
West winds have chased the pale snow to its home;
Come, trembling darlings of the fields and bowers,
Sweet harbingers of Summer sunshine, come!

DAVID MACHARDY HAMPTON,

TEACHER, was born at Laurencekirk in 1855. He was educated at the Parochial and the Free Schools. Having acted as assistant teacher in Bankhead, Birse, and for some time under the Government of India in the Punjaub, he has taught for the past seven years in the West End Academy, Dundee. He is collaterally descended on the mother's side from Alexander Smart of "Whistle-Binkie" fame, and from Professor Masson, of University College, Belfast, and afterwards Attorney-General for Greece—both poets of no mean order. Besides his rather exacting professional duties, Mr Hampton has for five years conducted the large and important commercial classes in connection with the Dundee Young Men's Christian Association, and he takes a lively and practical interest in several religious and philanthropic institutions. He is a frequent contributor to the local press, under the *nom-de-plume* of

"Spurs," but enlarged duties have for some time kept his pen semi-idle. He is a very successful teacher, having given special attention to caligraphy, and all branches bearing on a commercial education. Having seen a good deal of the world, and being widely informed on matters of general interest, he is an instructive and entertaining companion. He is also an enthusiastic Scotchman, with a great relish for ballad literature, and a remarkable power of tracing genealogies, and is full of traditions concerning our ancient Scottish families. Mr Hampton has written a number of pieces in illustration of various well-known proverbs, and also Oriental sketches, in which he is successful in depicting Eastern scenery and manners in idiomatic Scotch. He has written many musical, deep-thinking lines. His verse is singularly melodious, and most of his productions possess a natural beauty and a depth of pathos that lift them into the region of genuine poetry.

A TOCHERLESS DAME SITS LANG AT HAME.

It's a fact, an' I'm sure it's nae rare ane ;
  It's a fact, ye may ca' it a shame,
That a lass, tho' she's aften a fair ane,
  Gif she's tocherless sits lang at hame.

What's this that ye say, oh my crony,
  Aboot ony blythesome young dame ?
That, tho' she is guid and rale bonnie,
  Want o' tocher will keep her at hame.

Is it true ? Weel, I'll vouch for a puckle
  Wha hae to guid looks a bit claim,
That the want o' bawbees, sma' or muckle,
  Is the faut that just keeps them at hame.

Oh, laith are oor young chiels to marry,
  And gie ony dearie their name ;
But the tocher's the cause hoo they tarry,
  So the lassies sit lanesome at hame.

What's the reason for this want o' blessin',
  That the siller sud lichtlie love's flame ?

My freend, they're just gey fond o' dressin',
So the birkies say—"Bide ye at hame."

Were they half, half so thrifty's their mithers,
Then oor love wadna be quite so tame;
But to keep them wi' bravery like ithers,
They maun e'en bring a tocher frae hame.

But there's doos 'mang the corbies, my crony,
There's ane—ye'll be speirin' her name—
That has he'rt, heid, and hand, and she's bonnie—
Isna that a guid tocher frae hame?

So gin summer were here wi' its roses,
Mess John will be at his auld game;
Far better than tocher reposes
In the lass that I'll tak' to my hame.

BEAUTY IS WORTHLESS WHEN HONOUR IS LOST.

We lo'e bonnie bairnies, we lo'e bonnie men,
We lo'e bonnie lasses, and mair that I ken:
The blythe summer mornin', the calm autumn nicht,
When the sun has gane doon, an' we hail the twilicht.
Oh, sweet is the draucht when we're saired wi' the drooth,
Frae the bonnie bit burn near the hame o' oor youth;
But folk that are bonnie aft ken to their cost
That beauty is worthless when honour is lost.

Lat the lass that yer coortin' be bonnie, I trow,
Wi' her cheek like the rose, an' her een hae love's lowe;
Be broo white's the lily, hae neck like the swan,
And her manner the grandest that e'er tempted man.
Is she true till her troth? will she think on you aye,
In guid tale an' ill, an' ne'er ganging agley?
Should she hae but beauty, and truth nae her boast,
Then beauty is worthless when honour is lost.

Mak' this aye your guide, as you travel thro' life,
'Mang its stoor an' its cluds, in the calm or the strife,
To look nae at ootward appearance for a'—
Aft pleasant's the shell an' the kernel but sma'.
Gang deeper, if wise, and the truth may be plain
That the second or third thocht's the best thing agaein',
An' tho' summer be ootside, inside may be frost,
For beauty is worthless when honour is lost.

ZENDAVESTA.

Awa' ayont the Orient to Persia let us gang,
Whaur ane they ca'd Zor'aster taucht the folk the richt an' wrang,

To groves o' sweetest smellin' mirt that aye are bloomin' fair,
An' laummer nirranges gie oot a scent intil the air,
Unto a bonnie lan', I wat, wi' its ain sunny lift
That gars us wonner what's ahin', and peer thro' ilka rift
To hames o' glory hod awa' frae een o' sinful men,
Till glorifeed they wot the ferles that noo they daurna ken.
Alo' the ceetron or the pa'm lyin' doon to tak' a rest
At e'en, back-thinkin' as folk dae whan min' is at its best;
Just at the very time o' nicht whan birds to bourock flee,
An' weary man, gaun hameart wyes, frae trauchle rests a wee.
Oot frae a wee bit dell aside's comes up a soughin' sang,
Wi' singing slow and saftly, sadly, something's surely wrang;
It weel we lo'e, an' thocht flees aff awa' to bairnhood's hame,
To the country lo'ed sae dearly 'towre the stormy nor'land faem.
This gruesome, weird-like music wies oor hairt doon wi' a load,
Like cor'nach when they lay the chief in acre yclept o' God,
'Mang Bens strung owre wi' heath an' broom, an' ere grief crossed
oor broo,
As wee, wee toddlin' weans we ran, thrice happy as we're noo.
Harken than to this sangsterin', weesht for a whilie here,
Markna ye noo its queerness, sae mystical, yet sae clear,
Wha leads aff the choristers wha sing i' the twilicht mirk,
Near grave o' halie man wha ance was pillar o' their kirk—
An awnshint man, a priest belyve, his heid like driven snaw;
He croons frae book o' Guebre folk, wha lo'e the licht 'bune a';
Its name we ca' Zendavesta—their haly wird its aye;
Weesht till we hear the wirdin'. What has awnshint priest to
say?

"Glorious Fire, Thee ever will we bless and praise,
Source of light and living to the end of days;
Counsellor and Father, still to be our friend,
Guebres will adore Thee ever to the end.
Hail, Thou Great Effulgence, hail! Thou Orb of Day!
Guardian and Protector, to Thee we only pray
That Thy light may quicken and illume us all,
Rest Thee for the darkness, early raise night's pall.
Shone Thou on our Prophet when at early dawn,
Sore with heavy scourging, got at Ispahan,
Trod he o'er the desert, hurrying from his foes,
Sent to cheer his footsteps, Thou at morning rose.
Always will we praise Thee, Source of every good,
Thy stirring power doth give day by day our food;
Earth without Thy shining would be dark and wild,
Keep us aye and guard us, each Thy loving child."

Zoroaster than, wireetin', taucht his folk a time to lo'e,
An' aft afore the Heevenly Licht to mak' a lawlie boo,
To laud Him at his getting up, and when daylicht is dune,
He sinks aneath the crimson heichts that seek the lift abune.
An' sae the folk, aye readin' frae this Beuk o' sacred sang,
An' ha'ein' hantle faith that aye they dae nae muckle wrang,

Are sure this Zendavesta, wrote by guidly, haly man,
Heich up abune the Bible, an' far, far afore Koran.
Sae see we noo hoo aften, as in the langsyne time,
They "say their wirds" unto the Licht that brightens every clime;
Aye het and trothed, and siccar still, and michtna Christians lear'
Frae Guebre folk a lesson 'boot their foremost devyours here?
By Faith aye lear' when sand rins oot oor speerit flees awa'
To Faither's hand wha gied it, an' the Son's prepared Ha';
Lear' aye to pray at mornin' dawn, again at clud o' nicht,
Unto the God o' Glory hie, unto the Laird o' licht.

KISS! SWEET STOLEN KISS!

How sweet the kiss of parent mild,
As bending o'er her sleeping child
She breathes a silent prayer
That God will shield her infant boy,
And trouble ne'er that life annoy,
His sky be ever fair.

A sister modest, dear and good,
May try to calm an angry mood
By chaste salute and kind,
Yet wrath will often spurn the deed,
No charming influence we heed,
For passion still is blind.

Yes, Coz, thy soothing wrapt embrace
Oft cheered me through the weary race
O'er life's rough thorny track;
In many a silent thoughtful hour
Is given me back the happy power
To call those kisses back.

But still a want is felt in all
Those blisses that I oft recall,
With joy to think them mine,
A longing for some absent part
To cheer and warm the inmost heart,
And ne'er through life decline.

In after days, with love's first bliss,
I found the sweetest dearest kiss
A treasure aye to prize;
When parting with a virgin Eve
I snatched without e'er asking leave
The nectar none despise.

First stolen kiss! how oft since then
Have I enjoyed those lips again,
All barriers downward thrown;
But never did an after treat
E'er prove to me one half so sweet
As firstling not my own.

WILLIAM OFFICER

WAS born at "a wee farm toon" near Cairnlob, in the parish of Lonmay, Aberdeenshire, in 1856. From his seventh until his thirteenth year he attended the parish school at Crimond, after which he had to work on the farm; and for several years in the spring, summer, and autumn he assisted his grandfather in ploughing, sowing, reaping, and ingathering. During the winter months he attended school. Before his seventeenth year he left home, and for some time was engaged as a farm servant. It was then, and while following the plough and turning over the "wee modest, crimson-tippet flower," that his thoughts first essayed to form themselves into verse.

Becoming tired of agricultural labour, he engaged as an apprentice to a cabinetmaker in the seaport town of Peterhead, where he is presently employed by his first master. As an active member of one of the Mutual Improvement Societies in Peterhead, our poet has, on one occasion at least, been successful in obtaining the first prize in a poetical competition among the members—the subject being "Robert Burns." Although he has written largely, only a few of his productions have as yet come before the public. Those that have been published have graced the poet's corner of the *East Aberdeenshire*

Observer—one of the Peterhead weekly newspapers. His muse displays taste and careful execution, and is marked by considerable thought and feeling.

AUTUMN.

A stillness, like the stillness of the grave,
Broods o'er the cold, bleak earth, the mist-veiled sea—
A stillness such as throws upon the soul
The awful burden of eternity.

Slave to a train of mystic thought, I sit
Amid the shadows of an autumn wood,
As silent as the sombre trees that stand
The guardians of this dusky solitude.

A sere leaf rustles 'mong its native boughs,
Then trembling falls upon the grass beneath;
The sound dispels the charm that held me bound,
And fills my soul with the dark thought of death.

Remorseless death! the spacious earth contains
No hallowed spot that thou dost enter not;
Lo! here, where withered leaves lie numberless,
What dismal desolation thou hast wrought.

Thou breathest forth thy chill and blighting breath,
The leaves, the flowers are stricken, and decay;
Whate'er is brightest and most beautiful,
And frailest, thou first choosest for thy prey.

The strong abides, but thou shalt conquer yet,
As thou hast conquered all things heretofore;
In this world thou alone eternal art—
Thou shalt endure and conquer evermore.

Thou art the mortal enemy of man—
With thee he wages a perpetual strife;
Thou swallowest swiftly up the genial spring,
The golden summer of his transient life;

And then his pallid autumn comes, thine hour
Of victory, when he must droop and fade—
When he must lay his hopes and fears aside,
And take his place among th' oblivious dead.

PARTING.

TUNE—"*Annie Laurie.*"

Oh, list, the drum is beating,
My darling, I must go—
Must quit thy fond embraces
To grapple with the foe—
The rude, remorseless foe
Beyond the wide, wide sea;
But where'er I wander, darling,
My heart is aye with thee.

While I pace lonely, watching,
My roof, the midnight skies,
The brightest stars that gem them
Shall seem thy loving eyes—
Shall seem to me thine eyes;
Oh, how bright their beams shall be!
For where'er I am, my darling,
My heart is aye with thee.

When sleep upon mine eyelids
Like soothing balm shall fall,
I'll live in blissful visions,
And thou shalt fill them all;
And I throughout them all
Thy face and form shall see,
For awake, asleep, my darling,
My heart is aye with thee.

By day-time, as the sunlight
Glows on this cheek of mine,
I'll joy to think the same light
Shall also glow on thine—
Shall kiss that cheek of thine,
As it wanders far and free,
For by night, by day, my darling,
My heart is aye with thee.

Should e'er I come again, love,
From fields of death and gore,
I'll picture thee as waiting
For me upon the shore—
Upon our own loved shore,
Beside our trysting tree,
For, receding or approaching,
My heart is aye with thee.

Should steel of daring foeman
Pierce fatally this breast,

As I lie helpless, sinking
To my last earthly rest—
To calm and dreamless rest,
My heart shall be with thee ;
Oh, let thine dwell sometimes, darling,
In my lone grave with me.

UP! YOUNG HEARTS.

Up, young hearts ! be light, be gay,
And enjoy life's dawning day ;
Time is fleeting fast away,
Up, enjoy now while ye may.

Let those love-enkindling eyes
Glow like glorious summer skies
That lie bathed in sunbeams bright,
With no cloud to dim their light.

Up enjoy, there is no need
Sorrow for yourselves to breed ;
It will come, be not afraid,
Soon enough without your aid.

Let your merry laughter sound,
Waking echoes all around ;
Let it ring forth clear and deep,
Till it gladden those that weep.

TO A RUIN.

Dim ruin, whose once stately halls
Have dwindled down to mouldering walls,
Whose moss-encrusted battlements
Are marred by dark and rugged rents,
Whose bleak, sky-penetrating towers
Are but rude wrecks that time devours :
Thou shrine of thrilling mysteries
What weird and wondrous questions rise
Within the soul at sight of thee ;
What passionate desires to see
The strange events which, had'st thou been
Endued with life, thou would'st have seen.
Who chose thy noble site? What mind
Thy structure strong, yet fair, designed?
What hands did rear thee up from earth?
What eyes watched o'er thy gradual birth ?
What knights from thee of yore went forth,
Burning with valour, fierce, untamed,
Their hearts with mighty hopes inflamed—

With hopes of wreathing deathless fame
Around a feeble, mortal name,
On the death-haunted battle-field,
Where brave men perish ere they yield:
What knights went forth from thee, to come
'Mid ringing shouts of triumph home,
Their honour and their country saved,
Crowned with the glory that they craved?
What knights from thee went forth of yore,
Destined to come again no more?
What ladies lingered near thy doors,
And tripped along thy corridors?
How many were of gentle mood,
With looks assuring and subdued,
With manners gentle and refined,
With hearts deep-trusting, tender, kind?
How many more were stern and high,
With statelier mein, with colder eye,
Adorned with queen-like majesty,
Haughty, yet beautiful to see
What occupations, what delights
Beguiled them of their days and nights,
What loves within their bosoms glowed,
What feelings sacred unto God,
What secrets there had an abode,
What blighting sorrows did they feel,
What wounds that nought had power to heal,
What torturing doubts, what dismal fears?
Were their fair eyes oft dimmed with tears,
And did these flow like falling rain
O'er father, lord, or lover slain?
How often did these stones resound
With mirth, while foaming cups went round—
With wild and spirit-stirring strains,
With choruses and with refrains,
As guests and entertainers at
The wine-crowned festive table sat,
Forgetting, for a period, there
All thoughts of sorrow and of care?
What captives in thy dungeons lay,
Shrouded in night without a day,
Did any of them mop and fret,
And curse their hard and hapless fate,
Did any, with unwar-like soul,
Yield where they could no more control,
Did any of them boldly rise,
Like some proud eagle in the skies,
Above a dungeon's miseries,
And, with a zeal that languished not,
Circle the universe in thought?
These questions may within the mind
Arise, a thousand more may find,

There, side by side with them, a home,
But what avail they? Thou art dumb;
The race that ruled thee once is gone,
And thou, deserted and alone,
Art left a relic of the past—
A relic that is wasting fast.
Men wake to life, some years pass by,
Old age comes, they fade and die;
What portions of their works are stronger
Than they themselves are, linger longer;
These too at length must pass away—
The dust alone knows no decay.

MRS JANE CROSS SIMPSON.

MRS SIMPSON (*nee* Jane Cross Bell) is the daughter of the late James Bell, advocate. She is a native of Glasgow. Her first effusions, written in early youth, were published in the *Greenock Advertiser*, while her father for a short time resided in the town as assessor to the Magistrates. To the pages of the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, edited by her brother, Henry Glassford Bell, she afterwards contributed numerous poetical compositions, as well as various articles in prose to the *Scottish Christian Herald*, under the literary *nom-de-plume* of "Gertrude." Under this designation she reproduced her poetical compositions in "April Hours," a small volume that appeared in 1838. She had previously published, in 1836, a volume of tales and sketches, entitled "The Piety of Daily Life." In 1848 she published "Woman's History;" in 1859 appeared "Linda, and other Poems," which was followed by "Picture Poems." The former has gone through two editions —the second issue being published by Edmonston & Company in 1884.

Mrs Simpson is the author of the ever popular and beautiful hymn, "Go when the Morning Shineth,"—a hymn that has been set to several airs, and has had the honour of being rehearsed in full chorus at the Crystal Palace. "It has," says Mr A. J. Symington, "gained an acceptance rarely equalled—a hymn which, if it were the only product of the gifted poet's pen, would, in its influence for good, represent a life-work of Christian usefulness." Like other well-known hymns it has suffered from the hands of modern "tinkers" and patchers, who "adapt," without knowing anything or caring anything for "melodious measures."

Mrs Simpson is still an occasional contributor to *Good Words*, the *Christian Leader*, and other well-known magazines. She married her cousin, Mr J. B. Simpson, Glasgow, and resided there for many years. Her home was afterwards at Portobello, and she presently lives in Aberdeen.

Her productions possess much strong, practical wisdom, as well as deep, loving truth. They are evidently the sincere and earnest utterances of a noble and tender musical spirit, full of loving freshness and intensity of feeling. Her leading poem, "Linda," has been characterised as "full of ethereality and beauty," and by our selections from her miscellaneous poems, it will be seen that she can paint, in a few verses, complete and touching life pictures, full of human experience. While exposing the dark ways of the world, she softens the hard and thorny heart with the sweetness of her Muse, and hears in everything a language that tells of love.

"WHO ARE THOSE WITH THEE."

I have a little child on earth, his years are only four,
So wise in mind and speech he shows the years might well be more;
For oft as on my face he turns those dark fringed eyes of blue,
I feel as if my every thought he read with prescience true.

When I am gay, he meets my smiles with shower of merry prattle ;
He laughs, he shouts, he rides amain, a soldier bound for battle ;
He fights me with his small clenched hands, he shoots me with his gun,
He stabs me with his mimic sword—bold, reckless imp of fun !

If sadness find me while my boy sits at his quiet play,
With wistful look he starts, and flings the painted page away ;
Around my neck, in hushed surprise, his tiny arms he throws,
And presses fondly to my own those lips of dewy rose.

How strangely sweet the earnest gaze he casts upon my face,
As softly weeping I enfold him close in my embrace ;
In presence of that sympathy, so artless, pure, and mild,
I bless my heritage in him—a loving, living child !

I have another child in Heaven, her years were only three,
When as she lay one summer eve soft cradled on my knee,
With tender longing while I searched the pallid features o'er,
She smiled a faint farewell, and passed straight through the golden door.

Ah ! then an awful shadow fell on ocean, land, and sky,
I had no wish the livelong day save by her side to lie ;
I could not bear to see the sun sink to the crimson west,
The very hour my bud of hope had faded to her rest.

I gathered all the things she loved, the toys had pleased her best,
The pictured book, the string of beads, the doll in blue gauze dressed ;
I sat in sickly dream beside the clothes she used to wear,
And spoke my grief to little shoes, and to a curl of hair !

And now the living child seemed less, the dead filled heart and eye,
Though *he* was ever by my side, and *she* beyond the sky ;
What cared I for the present good, the blessings known and near,
"Give me the face I never see—the voice I cannot hear !"

At length there came an hour my soul woke to a high desire,
That my great woe might be sublimed to sacrificial fire,
All fretful, feverish murmurings to scatter and consume,
And cause a noble, sweet content to blossom in their room.

Up from the depths of sorrow rose the strong and pleading cry,
Down from the heights of mercy came the secret full reply ;
And as the sun upon my head through parting shadows smiled,
I blessed my heritage in her—my early sainted child.

Yes, children are eternal wealth, memorial flowers of God,
We do not lose them though they sleep beneath the daisied sod ;
Living or dead, they are our own ; and when our course is o'er,
They leave us last and meet us first beside the golden door.

HOUSEHOLD LOVE.

A little love goes very far
To smooth the daily care ;
It gives a brightness to the earth,
A fragrance to the air.
A smile upon a loving face,
A word of kindness said,
The pressure of a gentle hand—
By these good work is sped.

But when a little love grows great,
And the once tiny stream
Into a glorious river spreads,
All life becomes a dream.
From neck and arms the burden falls,
We're glad, and swift, and strong ;
We grasp our duty's hardest stroke,
And clench it with a song.

Then think, O friends ! whom changeful years
Have changeless bound to me ;
How in the daily round of toil
My feet should winged be !
I cannot wish my work were less,
Your love could scarce be more ;
Swift labour sings within our home,
And strong Love keeps the door.

I KNOW NOT.

I know not if thy spirit weaveth ever
The golden fantasies of mine for thee ;
I only know my love is a great river,
And thou the sea.

I know not if the time to thee is dreary,
When ne'er to meet we pass the wintry days ;
I only know my muse is never weary,
The theme thy praise.

I know not if thy poet heart's emotion
Responsive beats to mine through many a chord ;
I only feel in my untold devotion
A rich reward.

I know not if the grass were waving o'er me,
Would Nature's voice for thee keep sadder tune;
I only know wert thou gone home before me,
I'd follow soon.

But while thou walk'st the earth with brave heart ever,
I'll singing go, though all unrecked by thee
My great affection floweth like a river,
And thou the sea.

GENTLENESS.

Oh! the winning charm of gentleness, so beautiful to me,
'Tis this has bound my soul so long, so tenderly, to thee;
The gentle heart, like jewel bright, beneath the ocean blue,
In every look and tone of thine, still shining sweetly through.

What though the crowd with wonder bow, before great genius' fire,
And wit, with lightning flash, commands to reverence and admire;
'Tis gentleness alone that gains the tribute of our love,
And falls upon the ear like dew on flowers, from heaven above.

Ah! many a day has passed since then, yet I remember well,
Once from my lips an angry thought, in hasty accents fell;
A word of wrath I utter'd, in a light and wayward mood—
Of wrath to thee, my earliest friend, the noble and the good.

No answering words were given for mine, but, calm and bright as now,
Thy speaking eyes a moment dwelt upon my ruffled brow,
And then a sweet, forgiving smile came o'er thy pensive face,
And thy hand was softly tender'd me, with melancholy grace.

An instant mute and motionless, before thee did I stand,
And gazed upon thy placid mien, thy smile, thy proffer'd hand—
Ah! ne'er could angel, sent to walk this earth of sinful men,
Look lovelier in his robes of light, than thou to me wert then.

I long'd to weep—I strove to speak—no words came from my tongue,
Then silently to thy embrace, I wildly, fondly sprung;
The sting of guilt, like lightning, struck to my awaken'd mind;
I could have borne to meet thy wrath—'twas death to see thee kind.

'Tis ever thus, when anger wins but anger in return,
A trifle grows a thing of weight, and fast the fire will burn;
But when reproachful words are still in mild forgiveness past,
The proudest soul will own his fault, and melt in tears at last.

O Gentleness! thy gentleness, so beautiful to me,
It will ever bind my heart in love and tenderness to thee;
I bless thee for all high-born thoughts, that fill that breast of thine,
But most, I bless thee for that gift of gentleness divine.

NATURE AND ART.

How beautiful the earth this summer morn,
Like a babe cradled on a mother's breast,
Lies hushed and holy on the lap of dawn!
I cross the meadow, where the dear wild flowers
Look up, fresh wakened 'mid the sparkling dews;
I climb the stile, where by the winding river
Each day the corn's full phalanx mellower shows;
I sit me down beside the lulling water,
In prospect full of the great Northern hills
That with majestic sweep the landscape bound;
And, drinking the delicious air, I gaze—
Gaze long and earnest into Nature's face,
Till my eyes lose their office, and I float
From this grey battle-ground of careful sense
Into sweet fields of restful shade away!

O God of life! who lovest all things pure,
How hath man missed and marred the glorious gift,
By long-drawn structures of thick, stifling stone,
Wherein he wears his days 'mid dust and smoke!
Ceiled houses in pent cities, black and high,
Suit not the free-born spirit heaven-designed.
Why should we dwell close packed in dingy streets,
Encased by walls, inhaling noxious fumes,
'Mong gaudy fineries of upholsterer's art,
Holding hot feasts until the stars die out?
Why should we live this poor, weak, tawdry life,
When we might spend our brief bright span below
On breezy uplands, or the sea-girt downs,
With waving woods, green fields, and sounding streams,
With birds, and bees, and flowers, and springing grass—
All simple, beautiful, sublime, and true?
Now let me plead for Nature, as a child
Pleads for a mother passionately loved,
(Alas, too seldom seen!) that other hearts,
To whom 'tis given to bide in sylvan scenes,
May weigh their fortunes well, and walk henceforth
With holier thankfulness and humbler joy.
But we whose home is fixed in noisome towns,
How large the debt our grateful spirits own
To them whose artist genius gives us back
The fresh magnificence of land and sea!
Whose power makes eloquent our dumb, dead walls,

With mountain, forest, vale, and sparkling river,
Still lake, or storm-tossed ocean—all that make
The grandeur and the loveliness of earth.
We cannot thank them, nor reward aright;
Yet we may do far better: we may drink
Such wisdow from their works, with calmer front
Thence to sustain the strife of daily cares.
Painters may be our teachers, to subdue
The fiery passions—sermons most sublime
Of peace and hope the canvas may distil;
Pictures are friends to counsel, soothe, refine,
Sweet preachers all—a blessing on the art!

THE BIRD'S NEST.

In quiet dell, with flickering sunlight playing
On grass, and mossy stone, and tinted trees,
A peasant girl, at autumn noontide straying,
Has flung her on a bank at rustic ease.

Her small bare feet are poised behind in air,
Whiles careless she reclines upon her breast;
One hand amid the elf-locks of her hair,
The other guards her prize—a young bird's nest!

The fledgelings ope their mouths, and chirp for pity;
She will not harm them, that sweet cottage child,
Whose heart for aught so helpless, meek, and pretty,
Of its best tenderness is straight beguiled.

Wonder and pleasure, with a touch of sadness,
Illume her face, and flood her puzzled mind;
Ah, when did treasure bring unmingled gladness;
What rainbow gleam but hath a shower behind?

That peasant girl a lesson reads to me;
Her prize a type of much men dearest hold—
The thousand toys which bright and temptingly
The world display—rank, power, and fame, and gold.

Even as these tiny birds, we cannot say
How soon earth's fairest things may wing their flight,
And all the warm young loves we hold to-day,
To-morrow's breath may snatch from sense and sight!

Each in his life, at some auspicious tide,
Lights on some nest of hopes that woo his care;
How few of these sweet nurslings long abide,
How many leave us and are lost in air!

COLIN RAE-BROWN,

SON of a Captain in the Merchant Service, and author of some four or five volumes of poems, was born at Greenock in 1821. "His paternal ancestors," says the writer of 'Personal Sketches' in the *London Scottish Journal*, "one of whom was 'out in the '45,' were small landowners in the district of Cowal, Argyleshire." The family having removed to Glasgow, where Mr Rae-Brown's education was completed, he entered the establishment of Messrs J. & R. Findlay, the well-known fine art publishers—the resort of all who had a taste for art and literature in and around Glasgow. In 1843 he became the managing and junior partner of a similar business in Greenock. On the establishment in Glasgow in 1847 of the *North British Daily Mail*—the first daily paper published north of the Tweed—Mr Brown became manager, and displayed great zeal in promoting the interests of the "first Scottish Daily." Subsequently, the proprietor of the *Mail* purchased *Tait's Magazine*, and its advent in Glasgow was coupled with the arrival there of Thomas De Quincey, then on its staff. Our poet contributed frequently to the pages of that magazine, and when he published his first volume of poems, "Lyrics of Sea and Shore," the contents were dedicated to his friend De Quincey.

On the abolition of the stamp-duty on newspapers, in 1855, Mr Brown originated the *Glasgow Daily Bulletin* (the first daily penny paper published in Britain) which in 1861 merged into one of its formerly higher-priced contemporaries. Unceasingly active, he, between 1855 and 1860, became the motive power which set on foot several important and ultimately successful public enterprises, including the movement which ended in the erection of the National

Wallace Monument on the Abbey Craig, near Stirling. The Universal celebration of the Burns' Centenary was first mooted by Mr Rae-Brown in 1858, when he organised a committee comprising Sir Archibald Allison, Sheriff Bell, &c., whose efforts resulted in the great and memorable celebration and demonstration on the 25th January, 1859. Our author's services in connection with the centenary movement were afterwards substantially recognised by the presentation of a silver tea service. He is at present organizing a "Burns' Federation" of the members of Burns Clubs and Societies throughout the world, the object of which shall be to strengthen and consolidate the bond of union presently existing amongst the members of these Clubs by their universal affiliation. The executive Council of this Federation will, it is expected, take the direction of the arrangements for the proposed celebration in Kilmarnock in 1886 of the centenary of the publication of the first edition of Burns' works. "The London Burns Club," first constituted in 1870 at Mr Brown's private residence, has, it might be noted, now become a large and influential Society, with its *locale* at Willis's Rooms, the principal assembly rooms in the metropolis. Dr Charles Mackay is president, and our poet is vice-president. The contents of one of his volumes were dedicated to the "Sons of Burns," whose personal acquaintance he had made; and on the last 25th of January that James Glencairn Burns spent on earth he sent a congratulatory telegram to the host and guests assembled under Mr Rae-Brown's presidency at the annual Burns gathering in London.

In 1871 the subject of our sketch formed a distinguished committee in London to procure funds for finally completing the Edinburgh Scott Monument, which resulted in nearly £800 being remitted to Edinburgh. Mr Brown has lived for several years in London in comparative retirement, but several of

the leading English and Scottish magazines and literary journals still from time to time bear testimony to the practical manner in which his well-earned leisure is employed. Since the publication of his first work, in 1849, he has issued five volumes of poems and lyrics, the best known of these being "Noble Love," and "The Dawn of Love"—works that have met with the cordial commendation of "humble weeklies and dignified quarterlies." During 1874 he contributed his "Glimpses of Scottish Life" to the *St James's Magazine*. They were afterwards published by Messrs Sampson Low & Co. in three volumes, and in America they have been reproduced in several magazines, and also in a completed form. De Quincy on one occasion wrote to our poet:—"I have always welcomed your writings because of the warm human sympathies they evince, the freshness of imagery they display, and the purity of style in which the ideas are clothed." Walter Savage Landor was also a great admirer of his muse, and George Gilfillan considered his "Robert Burns" as ranking "high amongst the many poetical tributes to the Bard of Coila." On reading the following pieces our readers will readily endorse the opinion of these high authorities. He shows that poetry is "the April of our minds," the tears and sunbeams of thought, the language of nature, appealing not merely to the judgment or understanding. but directly to the heart. His sweet and tender verse is clearly the outcome of genuine feeling, and bears the stamp of an intellect of more than usual power and originality, as well as thrilling fervour, dexterity of expression, and condensation of thought.

STARVED TO DEATH.

Wearily, drearily, comfortless,
A girl sank down on a hard mattress,
While the golden light of a summer morn
Mockingly smiled on the poor forlorn.

Mockingly ! said I ? yes, it was so,
A hollow smile o'er a scene of woe :
A garret, all furnitureless and bare—
Save some prized relics of earthenware,
An ancient stool, and the old arm-chair

Where the lone one's father had breathed his last,
Batter'd and worn by many a blast ;
Fighting for England, he lost a limb,
And, generously, it pensioned him.

They had lived on this—with him 'twas gone,
Leaving her friendless—poor—and alone ;
She had stitched all night—two farthings won—
" O ! would that this weary life were done ! "

Nor brothers nor sisters e'er had she,
None—ev'n to share her misery—
O ! what pleasure ! starving together !—
Brothers and sisters—she had neither.

She had nor blanket, nor sheet, nor shawl,
To cover her poor shrunk form withal—
Shiv'ring with cold, though her burning skin
Told of the fever that raged within.

Then fell the thoughts—scorchingly keen—
Of what she was now, and once had been,
Hot on her brain—hot, aye burning hot !—
And again she wished that she were not.

Her spirit was broken : strength all gone ;
Even for the pittance she had won,
Go she could not, and starve she must—
Of water no drop—of bread no crust !

Words are feeble, they cannot express
How, in the madness of her distress,
She struggled for lack of bread and breath—
Starved to death—starved to death !

She died that night—when the next day dawned,
In search of the shirts—she had not pawned—

Came one who was callous, yet almost wept
Over her who now her last sleep slept:

Death—always cold—breathed so chilly there!
O'er the corpse—the stool—the old arm-chair—
That his blood turned cold, his teeth, like stones,
Chatter'd together, his very bones

Shook, as if he were palsied and old—
To be out again he'd have given gold,
But his limbs refused, he wished in vain,
And his knees knocked at each other again.

He wept—for, at times, the tears will flow
From the sternest eyes o'er woman's woe—
Gazing again on that lifeless clay
Without one friend to bear it away!

A pauper's burial, half-finished rites—
Grudgingly given—favours, not rights—
Did paupers' souls require their completion,
When, when would they rise to full fruition?

THE CAGED LARK.

Poor, prison'd lark! all thy regrets are vain,
Thou canst not visit the green fields of May;
Howe'er melodious may be thy strain,
Here thou art doomed in bondage close to stay.

What! set thee free—to joy with thine own kind—
To revel gladly in the summer air—
To join the throng harmoniously combined
To banish from each listener gloomy care?

Ah! it were fain such freedom to bestow!
They'd deem thee tainted by thy sojourn here,
Would rudely scorn thee—so increase thy woe—
But here, though prison'd, scorn thou needst not fear.

Dost note my words, and, noting, think them sage,
That now thou pourest out thy heart in song?
Art thou content to warble in thy cage—
Means so that note so clear, so rich, so long?

Let it be so! I'll cherish thee, sweet bird!
As fondly as a mother doth her child,
Will, daily, from the verdant, dewy sward,
Cut thee a turf whereon the sun hath smiled—

Will bring thee stores of field-food, fresh and green,
  Will tempt thy palate with a wondrous choice,
Will strive to gladden thee from morn to e'en,
  And all but satiate thee with little joys :

When comes the sun to smile on youth and age,
  Reviving many a sick and drooping heart,
Outside my window, then, I'll hang thy cage—
  There thou shalt sing till his last smiles depart.

What ! louder !—still more joyous than before—
  Thou art content, sweet bird, to stay with me !—
Then so am I, to tend thee more and more,
  And spend my leisure hours with books and thee.

LIFE IN EARNEST.

Linger not in lanes of sorrow,
  Sigh not 'midst their leafless trees,
Man must live for a to-morrow
  Till the Master-mind decrees
Higher life than is the human—
Higher love than that of woman.

Misanthropic doubtings never
  Guide to Wisdom's high estate,
But experience showeth ever
  That they but embitter Fate—
Till aside from Virtue's gateway
The poor doubter turneth straightway.

Once within Sin's gloomy portals,
  All the light of life is gone,
All the love that blesseth mortals,
  And he feeds on Vice alone—
Burning food that breedeth fever
In each tortured unbeliever.

Leave the haunts of senseless folly,
  Where no summer of the soul,
With its aspirations holy,
  Cometh from their wretched dole—
And in paths of honest duty
Life will gain undying beauty.

Tarry not till it is later,
  Downward steps await the feet
Of the doubting Virtue-hater—
  While congenial vices meet
In the soul-o'erwhelming ocean
Of a wasted life-devotion.

O believe that Life is earnest!
Be not to inaction given—
Yet, in working, see thou learnest
How to mount the stairs of Heaven;
For the soul that truly winneth
On the Earth its Heav'n beginneth.

THE POET'S MISSION.

This golden truth must be inwove
With what the Poet teacheth—
God's love surviveth life and time,
And all decay out-reacheth.

Imagination's noblest flight,
And most sublime emotion,
Have birth within the sacred pale
Of man's sincere devotion.

Religion is no puzzling scheme
Of doctrines weirdly mystic—
Existeth not in pomp and show,
Emblazon'd and artistic—

Divinely plain, thus runs its creed—
On God be all-depending,
Do as thou would'st be done unto,
And leave to Him the ending.

Those workers must needs earnest be
Who seek the mind's dominion—
Truthful as earnest, if they mean
To live in good opinion.

The Beautiful and True, combined,
Define the Bard's vocation,
And when his wing'd words touch the world
How great the world's ovation.

To teach Goodwill and Brotherhood,
The love of all that liveth—
The Law of Kindness, and the joys
That visit those who giveth;

Of candour, honesty, and truth,
To shew the common duty—
Of the forgiving heart to paint
The holiness and beauty;

To dwell on Love's enduring power—
On Passion's brief duration,

To laud those pure and lofty lives
That render great a nation ;

To trace His hand in ev'ry flower—
The meanest never scorning—
In ev'ry glory-flashing star
The crown of night adorning.

Such teachings flow like living streams
From Poesie's true fountain,
And cheer the trav'ller while he scales
The lofty Epic mountain ;

And many a sweetly simple lay
The heart of man enshrineth—
To yield a never-ending joy,
To speak when none divineth.

The sower may not live to reap
Reward for what he soweth,
Yet still have faith that, in the end,
Good seed to fruitage groweth ;

The Poet's work outlives his life—
His truths outlive decrying,
And flourish green amidst decay,
And men and nations dying.

COLIN CAMPBELL RAE-BROWN,

SON of the subject of our previous sketch, is a young, versatile, and very promising *litterateur*, as yet only in his twenty-fifth year. He was educated at Highgate, and from boyhood showed a great leaning towards literature. At a comparatively early age he wrote for many of the London weeklies, and latterly was a constant contributor of sporting and dramatic poems to the London *Sporting Times*, the popular editor of which expressed much regret on his leaving in 1884 to take up a permanent position on the staff of the *Fifeshire Journal*, one of the best

conducted and most interesting of our provincial newspapers. Since his connection with that journal, Mr Rae-Brown has published his first volume of poems, a charming little book in "old style" covers, entitled "Rhymes: Romantic and Racy." Many of the pieces are intended for recitation, and are admirably adapted for the purpose. The volume has been very favourably received both by the London and provincial press. Among the former is a lengthy and complimentary article in the *Literary World*, in which the work is spoken of as one of real merit. The author, it says, knows how to build the lofty rhyme, and he possesses much poetic vigour.

In addition to striking dramatic and narrative power and artistic skill, Mr Rae-Brown displays a rare aptitude for rendering widely different shades of thought and character. In the specimens we give of his muse, it will be observed that the undertones of our familiar speech, the divine light that quivers in a tear and flashes in a smile, the touching grace and guilelessness of childhood, are all felt and comprehended by his warm imagination and keen poetic sense.

TO-NIGHT.

Go! tell the skies to rain a shower of tears;
  Tell every stone to waken from its sleep,
And hurl itself against my ruthless fate.
  Bid every ripple dancing on the deep
To break into a wave, so grand and great
  That it be mountains upon mountains high—
  Then let it dash against my destiny.
And let it sweep the flowers from out my path,
  The dry, dead flowers that never more can bloom—
The blossoms that but wither while I weep,
  That make my life a garden full of gloom.

Bid every tiny songster cease its song,
  And beat its wings against its golden gaol;
For I'm so sad that it doth seem a wrong
  That birds should sing while I am mad and pale

With grievous sorrow and with ceaseless woe.
The wind but murmurs: bid it blow a blast.
The sun is shining: tell the clouds to cast
A curtain dark and dismal o'er the light,
For I am all alone—my love has died to-night.

OUR LITTLE FLO.

A STORY OF THE SLUMS.

You never knew my sister,
My little sister Flo,
She as they laid in the churchyard
About a year ago?

She was always wery sickly,
Wery thin, and wery white.
Her eyes were—oh!—such large 'uns,
And was always wery bright.

I never thought, as somehows,
She was the same as me;
But, in course, I never said much,
A'cept to old Bill Lee,—

Him as come round with the chestnuts,
And 'taters all steamin' hot,
For sometimes, now and ag'in p'raps,
He'd likely give me a lot,

For a-mindin' of his barrow
Whiles he went to have a swig
O' summat short and neat, yer know,
Round at the "Golden Pig."

But Bob Lee ain't the one as what
Yer wants to know about;
It's Flo, "Poor little Flo" what died
Jist 'fore the year was out.

She never *was* what I calls right
As long as I remember;
But she took wery bad indeed,
Beginning o' December.

In course when father died, yer know,
Our home went all a-wrong,
Flo couldn't git the little things
As she'd had all along.

The old dad used to pet her up,
Being the only gal,
'Sides beings always delikit,
And never 'ardly well.

'Twas Sunday, Christmas eve come on—
Well, just the day afore—
The snow was coming down full swing,
And driftin' through the door ;

It must have been 'bout five o'clock,
I looks at our little Flo,
And saw as how a change had come,
She was gittin' wery low.

A-looking, oh ! so pale and thin
As I stood by the bed—
The same as father laid upon
When he was cold and dead.

I looks an' says—" Poor little Flo !—
Yer goin' to a better place ; "
I couldn't help a tear or two
A-rollin' down my face.

I don't think how as mother knew
The end was quite so near ;
She seemed took back, when I goes up
And whispers in her ear :

" The angels won't be long, mother,
I think she sees 'em now ;
She 'ears 'em, for they've woke her,
A-calling little Flo."

And then I sits me gently down
Aside 'er on the bed,
And raises, up a-tween my hands,
The little golden head.

I sees as how she can't git breath
Enough to say my name ;
But knows quite well the look within
Her eyes mean jist the same.

I bends my head and kisses her,
And one more tear or two
Falls o'er the pallid, sunken cheeks,
That paler, paler grew.

Then mother takes one poor wee hand,
And cries, and waits the blow;
We know the angels then had come
To take our little Flo.

LOST AND FOUND.

Gone! like a dead bird's burden
Of song—from the whispering leaves,
Like the breath of a faded blossom
Of wild-flower—among the sheaves—
Is that part of my life called boyhood,
And joyhood, and days of dreams;
For in manhood there's not much leisure
For pleasure—not many gleams
Of sunlight between the shadows:
At least, I speak as it seems
As I say good-bye to my childhood,
To the wild wood, its birds and trees,
And hear the dirge of departed days
Borne on a passing breeze.

Ah! that was writ in the frenzy
Of a passionate youth's farewell,
At the nightfall of boy's delusions;
'Twas writ ere the slumbering spell
Of love had awoke at the dawning
Of a morning, laughing in light,
When the birds, adrunk in the madness
Of their gladness, sang all their might,
And the sun gleamed forth with a glory
That mocked each murmur of night:
There was nought on that morn but smiling
And beguiling—I heard a swallow swear
That I was in love, and was beloved,
As he kissed his mate in mid-air.

SUNLESS.

A ragged little arab
Pale and sunken-eyed and thin;
His features worn and wasted,
And around him—nought but sin.
Nought but sin and strife and darkness
Had he ever heard or seen.
"How old are you?" I questioned,
When he answered me, "Thirteen."
I wondered for a moment
At his stature—'twas so small.
Ah, small and bent and shrunken
Like the flowers that shrink and fall,

Whom the sunlight never kisses,
When heaven's breath ne'er breathes on them,
And their blossoms fade and wither,
Then drop lifeless from the stem.
"And your home is in this alley
Which you almost never leave?"
And I looked—around, above me;
Nay, my eyes did not deceive.
In the centre of the alley
With my arms outstretched, I stand—
That was all the width I tell you,
For each wall touched either hand.
This where child and man and woman
Had to live and had to die:
They are creatures—God's—like us here—
Have hearts, souls, as you and I.
"And the fields—you've never seen them?"
Thus he answered, with a leer,
"If ye means the Lincoln's Inn Fields,
They ain't very far from here."
No: the fresh, green, dew-dipp'd meadows
He had never crossed, nor strayed
Where, with golden sheen, the sunlight
Tips each little waving blade—
Where the children of the ploughmen
Live and play their lives away,
Bathed in light that falls from Heaven.
And this lad—if for a day
He could look upon God's greatness,—
Don't you think it would be well—
Well for him and for his fellows?
How are they to know or tell
How good and great their God is
If they never see his works?
Crime and cruelty—what wonder!—
Born and bred where sin but lurks.

Ye send missions to the savage—
Would ye wish or care to come,
You'll see a horde of savages
In each sunless London slum.

THE COSTER'S FAREWELL.

I've been thinkin' it over, Sally,
All this 'ere blessed day;
An' I've jist come to say good-bye, gal,
Afore as I go away.
It ain't no use me a-stoppin'—
Now as you've turn'd me up;—

But I say, Sal, it's a settler,
A precious bitter cup,
For a fellar to swaller what loves ye—
Aye, better than his-self,—
An' that's a-saying summat
As shows his 'eart ain't pelf.
I know'd it warn't no good, Sal,—
When that 'ere cove come here
With his flashy togs an' money ;
I al'ays 'ad a fear
As somehows you'd git spotted,—
You're so bloomin' pretty, Sal,—
You looks all the world like a fairy
In that musling dress,—you do, gal.

In course, I feels it a-goin' ;—
But it don't much matter for me :
As long as you're all right, dearie,
I'll al'ays easy be
When I know as my Sal is 'appy,—
I'll feel as I've done things right—
Altho' it's a reg'lar downer,
A darn'd 'ard battle to fight.

Jist a word 'fore partin', Sally;
All ain't gold as shines,
An' the blackest clouds as is, gal,
Is tinged wi' silvery lines.
This chap, as you've chucked me up for,
He's got-up tidy smart ;
But afore ye goes too far, gal,
Find out if he's got a 'eart.

Maybe this blow'll be, dearie,
Too much for me to stand ;
It's come all on a-sudden ;
But p'rhaps from the better land
I'll look down and see my Sally—
My Sally, I'll call ye till death ;—
An' that name as I loves so will be
Borne to heaven on my latest breath.

ALEXANDER STEPHEN WILSON,

CIVIL ENGINEER, was born at Mains of Loanhead, in the parish of Rayne, Aberdeenshire. His father was tenant of the farm, and was killed by a fall from his horse when the subject of this sketch was about two years of age. He was educated at the parish and other schools, and at the age of fifteen was apprenticed to a firm of land surveyors. Mr Wilson's first efforts in writing appeared in the *Aberdeen Herald*, edited by the well-known James Adam. A series of songs in that paper to illustrate a theory of song-writing was among his first efforts to woo the lyric Muse. But physical problems had also been engaging his attention; and in 1855 he published a little book, entitled "The Unity of Matter." It embraces his views regarding the physical basis of light, and the work at present going on in the solar system. The subject is dealt with in a most original way—the writer's keen power of analysis and induction leading him through tortuous mazes of reasoning to a clear issue. The book was highly commended in the *Leader* by the late G. H. Lewes. For a good many years afterwards Mr Wilson was engaged in railway engineering in various parts of the country, and did little literary or scientific work. The late Professor Dickie advised him to devote his attention to certain departments of Botany; and it is in this field that Mr Wilson has gained his brightest laurels. He contributed various papers to the Edinburgh Botanical Society, and some of his drawings are given in Balfour's "Manual of Botany." His discoveries have been many; but perhaps the best known of his services in this department has been his successful investigation into the causes of finger-and-toe. He was the first in this country to verify the discovery of Woronin that this disease is pro-

duced by a microscopic fungus. Charles Darwin intrusted him with the carrying out of certain experiments on two varieties of wheat which had been sent to him by the Governor of one of the Russian Provinces. The results, although not bearing out the ordinary view of evolution, were accepted by Darwin as perfectly conclusive.

In 1872 our author published a poem, "A Creed of To-morrow" (Longmans, Green, & Co.). It is intended to represent the candid view of a philosophic sceptic laying bare the utmost secret of his heart, in full trust of what he calls "the integrity of the absolute." As a poet, Mr Wilson is here at his best. His metaphysical subtlety finds expression in many a stanza that is quite striking in its pregnancy. His vocabulary is affluent; and though the metrical demands of his stanza are fairly exacting, he moves with ease, and scatters many a fair flower of poesy on tracks where few bards would have ventured to try their skill.

Meanwhile Mr Wilson's botanical studies had not fallen into abeyance. In 1878 Mr D. Douglas, Edinburgh, published "The Botany of Three Historical Records." and in 1883 the same publisher brought out a work our author had been more or less occupied with for sixteen years, entitled "A Bushel of Corn." The book is dedicated to the Highland Society, the Directors having decreed the MS. a gold medal. These works can be judged and properly appreciated only by specialists; but in exhaustive reviews of the latter work in the *Athenæum* and *Nature* a very high tribute is paid to the skill, research, and originality of the volume; and it is not too much to say that the work represents the high water-mark of scientific investigation into this branch of Metrology.

Besides these more ambitious efforts, Mr Wilson has at various times contributed leading articles for newspapers. As a specimen of his sallies, we may

quote his "Dairymaid's Definition," which appeared in *Punch*:—"Flattery is the milk of human kindness turned into butter." "But," says Mr Wilson, "a sweet spirit has haunted the recesses of my soul from the day that I first met her in the shadows of the summer woods." All his scientific labours, and they have been many, have not turned him from the lyric Muse. Making a selection from her favours, he has published these under the title of "Songs and Poems." This excellent volume was brought out by Mr Douglas in 1884. The songs are intended for musical treatment; and Mr Wilson informs us that many an unsingable word which gave them force has been deleted, and a feebler but more vocal sound put in its place. Mr Wilson has, to the multitude of his other attainments, added a considerable knowledge of music; and in writing songs he has always studied the interests of the singer. With the co-operation of his musical friend Mr Gavin Greig, he has brought out several of his songs in sheet form. They have been published by London houses, and have met with considerable favour.

Mr Wilson has now for a considerable number of years been enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* at his residence, North Kinmundy, in the parish of New Machar. But he is one of those with whom emancipation from mere bread-and-butter sciences means a call to higher activities. And a busy life he leads. For, besides the number of departments of study that claim his attention he discharges many public duties—all parochial organizations finding in him a popular head and effective leader. His personal qualities, no less than his wide culture, render him a most agreeable companion and valued friend.

As helping to an estimate of the comparative attractions of science and poetry, we quote our friend's experiences. He says:—"I have lived a sort of two lives—a scientific and a sentimental; but

the sentimental or poetical has always had for me the greatest charm." He adds a regret that he has not been able to cultivate the poetical gift as he would have liked. But when one reflects on the fact that in an age of intense intellectual activity he occupies a foremost place in a department of science demanding laborious and protracted investigation, we may well congratulate Mr Wilson on the results he has achieved in a field so widely removed from science as poetry necessarily is.

A BUD.

I would not break that chestnut bud,
Which feels the motion of its blood
  Creep out to meet the sun;
The mystery of life comes there
From Him whose presence everywhere
A thrill of hope and joy doth bear
  To happiness begun.

There lurks a dream in every cell
Whose far prediction none can tell,
  Nor trace its hidden rise;
And to that dream in golden lines
A kindred recognition shines
From all the world's exhaustless mines,
  In air and light and skies.

Within that bud a forest shakes
Where, vocal, in the dewy brakes
  The merles come out for May;
And whoso hath an ear to hear
Can trace the anthem rising clear,
Like some far music coming near
  Upon the opening day.

I know it hath a heart and grieves
When hands unfeeling break its leaves,
  And half its hopes destroy;
Its life takes hold of mine, the glow
Which makes the bursting flora blow,
Makes me to feel and think and know,
  And wish the blossoms joy.

One Father's hand hath made us all,
And Nature at the living call
  Its mission stood to hear;

Some breathings taught the dust to creep,
Some bade it grow, or fly, or leap,
Some bade it cry, or laugh, or weep,
And all to God was dear.

God made us all, whate'er His way
In calling buds and bards from clay,
That way records His mode;
And whether named creative deed,
Or evolutionary creed,
The utmost reason can but plead,
It is the way of God.

THE PRESENTNESS OF CREATION.

(From "A Creed of To-Morrow.")

We bask amid infinite fields
Where creeds must ever be renewed;
To-morrow's dawn material yields,
As fair as yesterday's reviewed.
Creeds are but hostelries where truth
May rest or slumber for the night;
But, braced in her unsated youth,
She leaves them with the rising light.

Time has no creed; his brightening years
Shake off the chains which bind the past;
Around his march confusion clears,
His sun rides noonward to the last.
Would he be worthy of his place
Could dead constraints his vigour foil?
Would man proclaim his heavenly race,
Sufficed with poor sisyphian toil?

I analyse the sun, to find
His metal plains resolved to light;
His ashes shone to build his kind
Far up the planetary height.
I mark this orb-flower on its way
Refix the dust which suns disperse;
Creation's work on hand this day—
The secret of the universe.

This day the sun has light to shine;
This day obedient orbits bend;
This day the forms of dust combine;
This day the winds their tasks attend;

This day the seas their shores abrade ;
  This day the earthquake lifts the land ;
This day the nations bloom or fade,
  Subservient to this day's command.

This day the pressing floods of power
  Send eager life along the brain ;
And come there not with this great hour
  The maxims which the soul constrain?
This day makes reference to none
  Of all the yesterdays, nor shines
By solar annals dimly known,
  But to itself itself resigns.

This day to hope the systems rise
  From involutions bright with joy ;
This day the systems emphasise
  The evolutions which destroy ;
This day, O God ! is time's first day,
  As much as any day that's past ;
This day shall all things pass away,
  As much as any called the last.

For still the full renewing flow
  Comes surging up the firths of time,
And new creations come and go
  Amid the cosmic pantomime.
The problem is before our eyes,
  Its elements of fear and bliss ;
Around us the solution lies,
  Nor past, nor future, but in *this*.

THERE ARE NO WILD-FLOWERS.

. . . . .

There are no wild-flowers ; Nature's boundless home
Is garden ground, where little fairy hands
Are training into beauty every stem.
There's not a blade of grass upon the meadow,
Nor lichen on the slowly creviced rock,
Nor moss upon the velvet of the woods,
But Nature knows and cultivates. Each bloom
Ascends from out the shadows of the dust,
Mantled with rainbows, pressing towards life
And towards beauty born in vernal dreams.

. . . . .

Can any flower be wild where all the forms
And motions of the world its wants attend ?

Forth at the call of Spring the Primrose peeps,
Folding its heart at first against the cold,
But learning, as the faithful sun returns,
A lesson of the wide, surrounding faith,
Till all its beauties, cast in confidence
Upon the bosom of the living whole,
Return the gifts which built its form of grace.
The bosom of the stone is not so cold
But that a little tuft of sporing moss
Will find a welcome garth to mould its urns;
And there, adorned in green and purple dyes,
The viewless fingers of attentive airs,
The watering sprays of kindly summer clouds,
And the warm flues led from the bounteous sun,
In culture intimate embrace each stem.
Who knows not, ere he lisps his mother's name,
The lyrics of the gowans and blue-bells?
The ruby fingers, where the knuckles hide,
Clasp the sweet treasure gathered from the lea,
Or margin of young river, while the heart
Enfolds them as companions of its joys,
Lays up their spirits when they fade and die
With memories of all things beautiful—
A cluster green of little phantom graves
Where buried are the living, not the dead,
And where, more loved than roses in their buds,
They add to all the bliss which adds to life.

THE MAN THAT WORKS.

The man that works, or thinks, or feels,
To sweeten time or mak' it wiser,
Though erring, is the best o' chiels,
Though poor, is richer than a miser:
The coof that plies nor head nor hand
To teach a truth or fill a happer,
Though spotless, has the sluggard's brand,
Though rich, is poorer than a pauper.

It's nae the want o' warld's gear
Can mak' the manly heart unmanly;
The toiler who his plot can clear
Is throned where labour crowns him gran'ly:
And though the lonely dreamer dream
A dream which never brings a shilling,
Each breast responsive owes esteem
To him who cheers its daily tilling.

'Tis not our gold that metes our state,
Our wealth's the joy we give to others;
Without a groat we may be great
If helpful to make mankind brothers;

The idle day is dark and poor,
  The busy day is rich and smiling;
And though his work no pelf secure,
  The noblest man's the man that's toiling.

EVOLUTION.

There are who think if science tells
  That man from less than man arose,
Sweet hope on high no longer dwells,
  And faith may now her vision close.
Weak hearts! for, whether false or true,
  The problem hated or explored,
Within, beyond, that curtain blue
  Stands the forepurpose of the Lord.

We think because our childhood's cry
  May playthings clutch, at first denied,
Our cosmologic history
  To our creeds may be modified.
We need no other creed than this—
  The trust in God's unknown decrees;
We cannot make, we cannot miss
  Our place within the weft of these.

A LIFE WI' THOSE WE LOVE.

O happy flow the darkest days
  Wi' love below the gloom;
Through ilka break a radiance plays
  Frae aff some fadeless bloom:
An' never can misfortune's frown
  The root o' joy remove,
Where heaven its fairest gift sends down,
  A life wi' those we love.

The grief that stings will soon be o'er
  Where faith her balm supplies;
An' kin'ly han's can best restore
  The loved in pain that lies;
There's refuge warm from every gale
  In friendship's blithesome cove;
Nae gilded pleasures can excel
  A life wi' those we love.

Wi' sweeter light than summer songs
  True hearts illume the dells;
While memory every hour prolongs
  Where mutual rapture dwells;

An' when I heir a homely share
Of yon bright world above,
O give my soul, transported there,
A life wi' those I love!

VICTORIA.

Whar Dee comes doon through heather bells,
An' shelterin' glens the roses woo;
Whar freedom dances ower the dells,
Whar love is leal an' hearts are true—
A bonnie lass adorns her bouir
In charms whase like time never saw,
An' Scotia names her sweetest flow'r
Victoria, Victoria!

Her smile of love gaes ower the lan',
Till grief an' pain are turned to glee;
The shadows 'neath her milk-white han'
Like cloods afore the morning flee;
An' whar she comes, for evermair,
To muir or mead, to hoose or ha',
The blooms and birds keep lilting there—
Victoria, Victoria!

Oh! wha wud chuse but loe a lass
Wi' spells which fancy's wings enchain,
Wi' graces queen did ne'er surpass,
Hae made a nation's heart her ain?
The rolls o' fame embalm nae name,
Which honour's finger springs to shaw,
Can beet, like thine, affection's flame,
Victoria, Victoria!

NOTHING IS LOST.

Nothing is lost; the unseen light which falls
From burning suns along the deeps of space
Returns in matter's all-transmuting race;
The silvan song of hope which vainly calls
Is caught in all its notes and intervals;
The violet when it meets no sense of love
With melancholy perfume soothes the grove;
The music which finds exit through the walls
For ever sweetens all the atmosphere;
The kindness which is met by perfidy
Yet casteth bread which shall in time appear;
The water spilt by roots will gathered be;—
Nothing is lost; shades keep the unseen tear,
And seas the rain-drops wasted on the sea.

GEORGE MAXWELL,

AUTHOR of a number of thoughtful, historic, and stirring patriotic poems, as well as warm and tender domestic poems, was born in Dundee in 1832. His father, though only a working man, was self-cultured, and intelligent, and therefore gave his family as good an education, as he could afford. At the age of fifteen, George was sent to serve in the shop of the late Mr Chalmers, bookseller, the accomplished inventor of the adhesive postage stamp. After being two years at this occupation, Mr Chalmers' brother, a flax spinner, wished to have him in his office, which he agreed to, and he was thereafter connected with the staple trade of Dundee for fully twenty-five years. Becoming connected with a slate quarrying company in North Wales, which turned out a failure, Mr Maxwell, after spending about four years among some of the wildest scenery of that romantic country, returned to Dundee in 1880. He was then employed as book-keeper in the extensive and well-known establishment of Messrs Spence & Co., drapers, until lately, when he was appointed to the congenial office of librarian in the *Dundee Advertiser* office, rendered vacant by the death of Mr Peter Begg, whom we have chronicled in the fourth series of this work. This is a position that Mr Waxwell, by his extensive reading and excellent literary taste, is eminently fitted to occupy. In addition to the writing of thoughtful prose sketches, he has, for the space of thirty-five years, he tells us, "rhymed in a spasmodic and desultory fashion, often letting the Muses rest for a long period, and when anything particular struck my fancy again courting their favour. My smaller pieces have occasionally appeared in local and other journals, but the bulk I have never had any desire to publish." We have perused several of his larger

poems, and we think he has no reason to be ashamed of them. They evince a keen intellect, warm patriotic fervour, and a thoughtful philosophic aim; while his shorter pieces show matured feeling, a meditative spirit, and fair poetic flow.

WELCOME ALL TRUTH.

"Let knowledge grow from more to more."—Tennyson.

O prize and welcome all—
All which can throw the faintest glow
On life's dull scene, or lift its pall,
Or tend to lessen human woe,
Or plant fair peace where discord reigns,
Or faith and virtue substitute for sin and mammon's chains—
O welcome all.

Gather all, welcome all—
Despise no light, however slight;
Reject no ray, however small,
For knowledge guides us to the right;
No faith is worthy of the name,
Unless absorption of *all* truth be its perpetual aim:
Incorporate all.

Ponder all, welcome all—
Each solar dye which paints the sky,
Each flower which decks this earthly ball,
Each star which sparkles far on high
Can healthful pabulum impart—
Contribute truth to nurse the soul, and to inspire the heart,
Then ponder all.

Study all, welcome all;
Let every one the lessons con
Which from all history's pages fall,
And deem not Hebrew race alone
The objects of Divine regard,
While all the remnant of the world was from God's care debarr'd;
Then study all.

Gather all, welcome all
The sayings sage of every age,
And raise not an impervious wall
'Twixt secular and sacred page;
For oh, *divine* is all true thought,
And every noble, earnest deed, by *whomsoe'er* 'tis wrought;
Then welcome all.

Hail, hail, and welcome all
The good works which the world enrich ;
All strivings against error's thrall,
And every effort truth to teach ;
But oh, above all, welcome give
To Christ—the one unique of all that e'er on earth did live—
Him welcome all.

Ay, prize and welcome all—
All that records His life and words,
His lowly birth within the stall,
The glimpse the artless tale affords
Of faculties so young yet sage,
Bent earnestly on highest things which can men's thoughts engage—
O welcome all.

O prize and welcome all
His deeds sublime in manhood's prime,
His Cross and rising, which ne'er shall
Lose potency throughout all time,
But ever yearning souls shall save—
And aye shall guide to present peace and hope beyond the grave—
Christ welcome all.

THOUGH MARRIED, WE ARE LOVERS YET.

O come, dear wifie, come awa',
Let's leave the stoorie toon ;
By silv'ry brook an' greenwood shaw
We'll pass the afternoon.
The summer sun sheens bricht an' warm,
The sky is blue an' clear,
Sae wi' oor bairnie on my arm
We'll wander forth, my dear ;
For though we're married noo, lass,
An' cares an' toils annoy,
Yet still we're lovers true, lass,
An' deeper far's oor joy.

The flow'ry fields, the ripplin' streams,
The lav'rock's blithesome sang,
The bonnie full moon's mellow beams,
Glintin' the woods amang,
Are still as fair to us as when
A maiden young an' gay
Ye placed in mine yer trustfu' han',
An' kentna what to say.
For though we're married noo, lass, etc.

Oor humble hame is dearer far
Than a' that wealth can gie;
Oor bonnie bairn's the eastern star
That guides my love to thee.
For ilka warldly care an' strife
Thy sympathy's the cure;
Sae blessin's on thee, gentle wife,
Oor love shall aye endure.
For though we're married noo, lass, etc.

TO THE COMET OF 1858.

Mysterious wanderer on high,
Which nightly gleams athwart our sky,
What and from whence art thou?
Art thou a minister of wrath,
Disease and famine, war and death,
From the Almighty's bow?
Or an ambassador benign,
Harmonious blending with creation's grand design?

Let superstitious dread begone,
And though thy functions are unknown,
With reverence let us trust
That for some wise and useful end
Our God created, and did send
Thee 'mongst the starry host—
Perchance a messenger between
Our own fair universe and distant worlds unseen.

Then speed thee o'er thy path sublime,
Until at length revolving time
Again shall bring thee near;
And may'st thou find upon this ball
That knowledge, truth, and virtue shall
Have progress'd year by year—
That despotism's reign hath pass'd,
And happiness and peace pervade our world at last.

JAMES RENWICK, THE LAST SCOTTISH MARTYR.

A noble victim closes up the glorious martyr list,
Who for the space of fifty years did tyranny resist;
Who left their homes and hearths and all which others mostly prize
To worship God as conscience taught beneath the rocks and skies.
In Caledonia's lonely glens and on the mountains hoar,
Amidst the misty moorland fens, and by the sandy shore,
The pastor and his humble flock poured forth their prayers and praise,

Half drown'd amidst the torrent's dash or ocean's sounding lays.
And oft amongst such helpless throng the regal tyrant's band
Would rush, upon their thundering steeds, with naked sword in hand,
And trample 'neath their ruthless hoofs and smite with cowardly steel
Old men and women, youths and maids, amid their holy zeal,
Till all the ground a ghastly group of murdered victims bore,
Till purple ran the mountain rill and sod was dyed with gore.
James Renwick was the last of those who suffer'd in the cause
Of right against tyrannic might and base and bloody laws;
His years were young, but he was old in fortitude and zeal,
In stature small, but strong withal in firm and iron will.
For seven long years he had not known the comforts of a home,
But through the moorlands, wilds, and glens undauntedly did roam,
Preaching the truth of Christ to all who nobly dared to hear
The glorious tidings undismayed by cowardice and fear.
He oft did suffer much from foes, but more from hollow friends,
Who scorn'd to tread his thorny path or labour for his ends;
A faithful warrior still was he, who bore upon his shield
"No compromise with what is right, and what God hath revealed."
Accept who might the tyrant's terms, to *him* the rewas no choice
Save freedom absolute of thought, of conscience, and of voice;
He, like his Master, was prepared his life to sacrifice
To gain the end for which he strove, the truth which he did prize.
In city, field, or council hall his voice should aye be heard,
Till freedom or the martyr's crown his efforts should reward.
Though freedom's day was nigh, alas, to *him* it was not given
To reap the harvest of the seed to sow which he had striven,
Behold him brought at length to get the crown so nobly won,
Through medium of a gibbet high, beneath the vernal sun.

. . . . . .

The ample square was crowded full to see the martyr die;
Although some sneer'd, yet many turn'd on him a pitying eye.
Intrepidly the young man spoke, while all around stood dumb,
Until his voice they strove to drown with noisy trump and drum,
Yet prophet-like his tones rang out, and told the day was nigh
When right triumphantly should reign and tyranny should die;
Then, kneeling in the sight of all, he at the gibbet's base,
Alike for self and friend and foe implor'd th' Almighty's grace.
And even while in prayer he bent, and as he thus did plead,
The ruthless executioner perform'd the murderous deed;
His earthly trials soon are o'er, and then to Heaven's bright land
His ransom'd spirit winged its flight to join the noble band,
To dwell amidst the martyr host and their all-glorious King,
Who robb'd the grave of victory and took from death its sting.

. . . . . .

THOMAS ECKFORD

WAS born almost in sight of "The Bush Aboon Traquair." His parents in their youth were on intimate terms with the Ettrick Shepherd, and Laidlaw, the author of "Lucy's Flitting." His mother was related to Mungo Park, the African traveller. His paternal "forebears" had a connection with the Traquair estate as farmers for two hundred years. His mother, while acting as housekeeper to her grandfather, who was the parish teacher at Traquair, remembered seeing "The Shirra" and Christopher North on one occasion meet Hogg at the Schoolhouse. Thomas was born "about a month after the death of Sir Walter Scott," and was such a delicate child that he had to be carried on a pillow till he was about two years old. The district around Minchmoor was at that period noted as a resort of witches, and he was declared by the wise old folks to be one of the "Warlocks of the Well Pool."

His father, who was a builder, having met with reverses about this time, had to start again as a journeyman, and the family removed to a cottage built for him by the Laird of Cardrona, Captain Kerr Williamson, at the foot of Wallace's Hill, opposite Glenormiston. In his ninth or tenth year the subject of our sketch was sent to herd "eild beasts," and continued at farm work for about two years, sleeping in the stable loft. He then returned home, and attended school for a short time, when a companion and riding preceptor being required for the young laird, he was appointed to the situation, which he filled for two years. After "a quarter" at school again, he served his apprenticeship to the joiner trade, reading diligently during his spare hours, and attending a night school for several winters. He was afterwards appointed warder and joiner in

Watson's Hospital, Edinburgh, and ultimately head warder. In 1875, after being eight years in connection with the Hospital, he was elected, out of 814 candidates, to his present situation—that of "keeper" in the *Scotsman* office, respected by all he comes in contact with for his modesty and intelligence, as well as his obliging disposition. He tells us that if fortune had favoured his youth with an ordinary education he thinks he might have turned out a writer of poetry, for "I drank the love of it with my mother's milk, and could repeat "Wattie and Meg" before I had seen it in print. I remember—in the long winter nights, when father was from home and working at a distance—lying in 'the box bed' in line with my mother's, crooning over the Paraphrases, which I think between us we could say from end to end, and she would sometimes give us 'The Pedlar o' Thirlstane Mill,' or Bonny Kilmaney' for a change."

Mr Eckford *has* written poetry, and his early thoughts and poetic surroundings have been pictured in vivid and realistic word-painting, and moulded into sweet and tender verse. His muse is unpretending, yet occasionally affluent in fancy, and frequently contains passages of chaste beauty.

STRIKE THE BORDER HARP AGAIN.

Yes; strike the Border harp again!
Let echo catch the sweet refrain
From shepherd's reed at break of day,
Or love's enamoured roundelay,
When twilight settles o'er the mead,
By storied Teviot, classic Tweed,
Or where the breeze down Ettrick breaks,
And dimples Yarrow's lonely lakes.

Yes; let the forest flowers be sung,
And Border beauty find a tongue,
As summer gay, and fresh as spring,
Its love inspiring charms to sing,

To lilt its fairy-haunted nooks,
And chant the cadence of its brooks,
Refresh the halo of its fame,
Or fetch it still a nobler name.

Yes ; touch the aged, honoured lyre
With native talent's patriot fire,
And bid creations live anew,
Like Snowdoun's Knight and Roderick Dhu ;
To succour love or challenge war
Like gallant, dauntless Lochinvar ;
Or sing again fair virtue's gem,
Some sweet Kilmeny's diadem.

Send creatures from some shepherd's brain
To ancient Holyrood again,
Or let a startled world own
The genius of some "Great Unknown,"
Or cast around the year a spell,
And bid the circling seasons tell
The might and magic of the power
Which girds the thunder, paints the flower.

Yes ; let the thrilling tone be heard—
The native swell of each old chord,
Touched by a sage, heroic hand,
With legend of the Borderland,
Revering truth and virtue's dower,
Religion's fortifying power,
True valour, beauty, pleasure, pain—
Yes ; strike the good old harp again.

THERE'S STILL A "BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR."

No warlock now is ever seen—
The witches all are wede away,
And dancing through the wildwood green
At rosy dawn or twilight grey,

No fairy bands, with nimble feet,
And elfin music's magic sound,
Make trysted lovers shy to meet,
And forest glades enchanted ground.

But though no longer witchcraft's spell
Or warlock cantrips hold their sway ;
Though peering from a fair blue bell
No fairy hails our dawning day ;

The light of love, with softening gleams,
Comes glinting through the darkling haze,

Which settles o'er our woods and streams
Of rural life in former days.

And manly worth and beauty's bloom
Have left a heritage behind,
In virtue severed from the gloom
Of years, which makes one pleased to find

There's still a "bush aboon Traquair,"
A clump of stately Scottish firs,
And lurking in the hillside there
A "birchen bush" so fragrant, sirs.

And there is still an auld kirkyard
Abune Traquair, and gathered there
Are memories on the mounded sward
Of friendship, love, and auld Traquair.

And down the burn, beside the mill
Where waters meet, a mystic sound,
With fancy-stirring cadence, still
Enchants the beautiful around.

And round and round, both far and near,
Are sacred spots still nestled there,
Through friendship's charm, to memory dear
About "the bush abune Traquair."

EARTH'S FLOWERS MAY FADE.

Earth's flowers may fade when autumn comes,
And winter days draw nigh,
Round bonnie Scotland's favoured homes
Beneath her northern sky.

Sweet songsters of the grove may cease
To pour the notes which tell
Of joy, and purity, and peace,
Along their native dell

When winter comes, and leafless trees—
Sage monitors of death—
Stand quivering in time's changeful breeze,
Smote by the spoiler's breath.

But love and song can never die.
Eternity will tell
Of love's unending destiny,
And song's celestial swell

Will still be heard when time is gone,
And love has vanquished death,
Resounding round the eternal throne
A ransomed world's breath;

Tuned in the choir of seraphim
With countless hosts above,
The theme of their eternal hymn,
The source of song and love.

THE MOTHER'S SONG.

Oh, the pawkie, pleased goo, goo,
Of the charming cooing doo
Which yon sunny summer morning fetched to me,
With its peerless, pouting wiles,
Love-lit, home-enchanting smiles
Lying hushy baby now upon my knee.

She's her mother's pretty pet,
Hope-inspiring jewel set
'Mong the crowing joys of life so fair to see;
Her fond father's dawtie dear,
Sent by Heaven his heart to cheer—
Hushy baby, cuddle cozy on my knee.

May the grace of God be thine,
Guided by His power divine;
May the liberty which sets the captive free
Set my white-robed, jewelled lamb
Down beside the great I AM,
In His Kingdom! hushy baby on my knee.

When her life's brief race is run,
And time's amber setting sun
Wanes before the light of life and love's "well e'e,"
Charm's chaste lily blooms aboon,
When earth's joy has ceased to croon
Mother's darling! hushy baby on my knee.

WILLIAM PYOTT,

WHILE loving the tuneful sisters with his whole heart, and holding the pursuit of the Muses as a secondary consideration when set against the more practical duties of life, is a true son of song. He is a native of Ruthven, Forfarshire, and was born in 1851. His earliest recollections are of his father—a mill-overseer—sitting during the winter evenings by the fireside, reading aloud, while the family sat at his feet, and drank in every word as it fell from his lips. He regards himself as primarily indebted to his sister Mary for the warm love of poetry early engendered in his breast. He informs us that "ours was not a bookless house. My father read 'Chambers's,' 'Rollin's Ancient History,' and 'Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' and my sister took 'Cassell's Paper;' and round the homely hearth you would have heard questions discussed that would astonish those who think the working classes do not concern themselves about subjects beyond the sphere of their daily toil." On "washing days," when his mother was busy, this sister would take him away to the "braes," and amuse him by gathering wild flowers, and repeating old ballads to him. While he was a mere child he possessed a fair knowledge of history, and took a peculiar delight in the beauties of nature—the spring with its myriad blossoms, the autumn's decaying splendour often making him pause and wonder before he had yet learned to express himself in song. Before he went to school, he was familiar with many of the stirring episodes in the lives of Wallace and Bruce, and had formed a love for books. The humour and pathos of Burns, and the fire and dignity of Scott delighted him beyond measure, and being particularly

fond of ballad poetry, when he had a holiday he frequently spent it in visiting grey ruins and scenes of historic interest. The family having removed to Blairgowrie, he was sent to work in his twelfth year in a flax mill, atttending a half-time school at Craig Mill, Rattray, where he received the little school education he ever got. Our poet worked as a cloth lapper until lately, when he was appointed to the congenial situation of colporteur of the district, in which office he is widely esteemed for his obliging disposition, intelligence, and general excellence of character.

In 1869 Mr Pyott published a small selection of his poetical productions; while in 1883 he issued a larger volume of "Poems and songs." The latter work met with such a cordial reception as to encourage him to prepare a third volume, which will be published during 1886. This, like the previous, will contain several excellent ballads, with valuable notes attached to them. These ballads contain much poetic fire and pathos, and most powerfully reproduce the spirit of the old-time minstrelsy. His less ambitious and shorter pieces are happily conceived and full of easy rhythmic flow. Yet while there is music and thrilling fervour in portions of his verse that is all but perfect, he evidently knows that poetry is born in thought, and that rhyme and rhythm are not the first essentials in song.

THE BAIRNS.

Come, Muse o' auld Scotia, come, sweet Muse o' hame,
Frae the shades whare you wander by mountain or stream,
An' cantily smile on my heart-warming theme,
On this sweet simple sang 'bout the bairns.

O, there's nocht i' the warld that's sae pleasant to see
As a wee crood o' young things a' jumping wi' glee,
For Heaven-planted houp hauds her bricht jubilee
In the wee trustin' hearts o' the bairns.

The angels nae mair frae their mansions o' licht
Flash the glories o' Heaven on oor dim carnal sicht;
But the kind heart an' true sees a presence as bricht
In the innocent looks o' the bairns.

The fairies are gane frae the green sylvan nooks;
I hae socht them in vain by the dells an' the brooks;
But I've seen them keek out frae the slee pauky looks,
Frae the bricht glancin' een o' the bairns.

Lang, lang wi' them a' may the glamour remain
Sae blythe in that bricht sunny warld o' their ain;
O, as pure as the fa' o' the sweet vernal rain
Are the thochts in the minds o' the bairns.

They blossom like flowers by the highway o' life;
They gie us mair heart for the toil an' the strife;
O, licht is the burden to fond man an' wife
When cheered wi' the smiles o' the bairns.

Like the sunshine the weans shed a beauty ower a';
They brichten the cot an' they smile thro' the ha';
An' we think the hoose dull, be it ever sae braw,
Whare we meet wi' nae signs o' the bairns.

Even bachelor bodies, sae shrivel'd an' thin,
Though they aften complain o' bein' deaved wi' the din,
Hae a hole i' their hearts whare the bairns can creep in—
They like the blythe looks o' the bairns.

An' the canny auld maids—noo my Muse disna joke—
Hae a nook i' the cupboard for sweeties an' rock;
They weel ken what pleases the auld farrant folk;
They've an unco fraika wi' the bairns.

O, it cheers the dowf spirit o' lanely auld age;
It brings back the licht o' the e'e o' the sage,
Just to fling care aside, and a'e blythe hour engage
In some sweet harmless ploy wi' the bairns.

It minds him o' days when his bosom was young,
When the warld was a garden o' blossoms new sprung,
An' his heart chimed responsive as Hope sweetly sung
The sang she aye sings to the bairns.

And when darkly around him the last shadows fa',
As the cauld hand o' death sheds a dimness ower a',
The voice, ance sae strong, melts in saft tones awa'
Wi' some sweet simple prayer o' the bairns.

It's the true honest heart that makes wisdom sae grand ;
We maun a' cling like weans to the gude Father's hand,
E'en the wisest maun enter yon bricht mornin' land
Wi' faith like the faith o' the bairns.

LORD RUTHVEN ; OR, THE WAES O' DUPPLIN FIELD.*

"Fause Baliol's bark is o'er the wave,
It has touched the Scottish strand ;
Then, hey ! for the norlan axe an glaive
Gainst Southron bow an brand.

Gae licht a blaze on the castel knowe,
Let the red cross speed thro the glen,
For this deed will wauken a kindred lowe
In the hearts o my trusty men.

Already brave Maxton an' stout Lord Grahame
Hae up an' ridden awa ;
An' sall Ruthven lag like a hind at hame
When the gatherin' pibrochs blaw.

Thus spak Lord Ruthven o' Huntin'tower,
As he strode the chamber roun' ;
Like the summer sun frae its mornin bower
Sweet Ellen cam glintin doon.

"Come, Ellen, lace ye my corslet fast,
An' awa wi the lave Ill gae ;
But, Ellen, why do you seem dooncast ?
O, my leddy you look wae !

She flung her arms around his neck ;
Was ever heart sae true ?
The tears cam drappin' doon her cheek
Like the mornin' blobes o' dew.

An' saft her yellow ringlets bright
Slid frae the silken band,
An' wandered doon like threads o' light,
Till they touched his mailed hand,

Then she said : "My Lord, you are sick an' sair,
Wi' that auld scaur in yer side ;
Tak heed ! tak heed, ere forth you fare
Ower anither field to ride.

*Donald, Earl of Mar, was Regent at the time of the battle of Dupplin.

For I dreamt yestreen that my ain true knicht
On a luckless field lay slain,
Never to ride by the regent's side
Wi' his bonnie bands again.

O, I thocht I strayed through a forest wide,
An' mony a sheugh I cross'd ;
An' the leaves fell doon on ilka side
As though seared by sudden frost.

An' syne I cam' to a dowie stream,
O, the bank was rough an' steep ;
But a terrible shadow within my dream
Seem'd to urge me to the deep.

An' aye I faucht wi' the jawin' wave,
Faucht sair, but never gat through ;
For it hemm'd me in like a living grave,
Sae I clung mair close to you.

Syne my dream was changed, an' on Dupplin heicht
I stood at the midnight hour ;
The wan moon glimmered athwart the nicht
Wi' a cauld an' death-like glower.

Then there cam a soond frae the waterside,
Like a steed's impatient neigh
When the mailed ranks to battle ride,
An' the slogan swells on high.

An' a lurking foe made sudden rush
Our startled tents amang ;
On ! on they did push through brake an' bush,
Till bills* an' broadswords rang.

But our stately bands seemed a' in a rout,
An' the foe did them pursue ;
O, I wat it wasna a Scottish shout
That pierced the welkin through.

An' wha did I see but my ain gude lord
On that heath sae mirk an' chill ;
A broken brand ye clutched i' yer hand,
But the hand was cauld an' still !"

Up spak her lord wi' a kind, kind glance :
"Sweet Ellen, I gang awa' :
But fear nae, love, that sic foul mischance
Sall our bonnie bands befa'.

*The bill was a weapon used by the English infantry.

For our youthfu' monarch's royal richt
We hae drawn the sword this day ;
An yon fair sun sall be quenched in nicht
Ere we own this king o' strae.†

But my leddy will laugh at sic needless fears,
An' dance me a sprightly fling,
When, to welcome our victorious spears,
St Johnstone's bells will ring."

The beacon blazed on the castel knowe,
The red cross flashed through the glen,
An' Lord Ruthven marched frae St Johnston's gates
Wi' a thousand kilted men.

O, I wat they were a comely sight
That day, as they marched awa' ;
But Ellen gazed on that pageant bright
Wi' cheeks maist like the snaw.

O, she waited lang, an' she waited late,
The day broke sweet an' fair ;
But a horseman stood at St Johnstone's gate
Wi' the tidings o' blank despair.

An' St Johnstone's bell rang a mournfu' knell
As a bier came sad an' slow ;
Then, as fa's the flower i' the blaudin' shower,
The gowden head sunk low.

In their mailed arms they raised her up
Frae the cauld turf where she lay ;
An' they pressed the cup to her pallid lip,
But the true heart throbbed nae mae.

So they brought her lord, an' side by side,
They were laid in a stately tomb,
The knicht that had fa'en in manhood's pride
An' the lady in beauty's bloom.

THE SLIDE.

O weel I mind the days sublime
When we were laddies a'
We welcomed aye the jolly time,
That brocht the frost an' snaw.

† "King of Straw" was a name given to both the Baliols in derision.

Cauld winter brocht us fun galore,
Upon his icy hide,
The rattlin' game, the gleesome splore,
The glory o' the slide.

Some tore alang wi' awkward stride,
Some fit to fit could close,
An' some could on their hunkers slide,
An' some gaed on their nose.
But what were scaurs on cheek or brow,
We bore them a' wi' pride;
We stood our dunts like heroes true
When we were on the slide.

Since then our cronies ane by ane
Hae slidden here and there,
An' fortune on the dirly bane
Has thumpet some fu' sair.
Alas that grief our fun should mar,
Or years sae lang divide,
I'm sure that we were happier far,
When we were on the slide.

O lads ye wish that ye were men,
But years glide fast awa';
Auld age slides on us ere we ken,
An' nichtshades round us fa'.
May Ane aboon aye be your freend,
Your counsellor an' guide;
Past a' the ills that downwards tend,
May you hae pith to slide.

ROBIE'S SANGS.

There's nae sangs like Robie's sangs,
That ere were made for singing;
Robie's sangs are rare sangs,
Frae the heart's core springing.
Dool an' sorrow be our fa',
Fickle fortune wi' us thraw;
A nicht wi' Robie southers a',
Life an' gladness bringing.

Sing Duncan Gray, we'll loup an' fling
'Mid spates o' joyous feeling;
Wi' Bonnie Doon the tears 'ill spring,
An' ower the cheeks come stealing.

While 'neath the spell o' Scots Wha Hae,
Companions of the glorious day,
We'll hear again, ower wood an' brae,
The freeman's slogan pealing.

Ower the lang nicht o' the years,
Scotia's crest adorning,
Robie wi' his harp appears,
Shades o' darkness scorning.
Robie wields the mace o' Thor,
Superstition's rags he tore,
Showed us Nature's face once more,
Lovely as the morning.

The pith o' truth wi' Robie dwells,
Frae God the bounteous giver;
Manly independence swells,
Mighty as a river.
Auld Nature's sel', by wood an' stream,
Thrills at the sound o' Robie's name;
Sae to our hearts we've taen him hame,
To keep him there for ever.

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Edwards, David Herschell
Modern Scottish poets

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